THE TRAVELS OF CYRUS.

To which is annexed,

A DISCOURSE UPON THE THEOLOGY AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE PAGANS.

BY THE

CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

VOL. II.

GLASGOW,
PRINTED AND SOLD BY R. & A. FOULIS
M.DCC.LV.

1606 | 1833

THE TRAVELS OF CYRUS.

SIXTH BOOK.

CYRUS no ſooner arrived in Crete, but he went ſtraight to Gnoſſus, the capital of that iſland, famous for the wonderful labyrinth made by Dedalus, and the ſtately temple of Jupiter Olympius. This god was there repreſented without ears, to denote that the ſovereign Lord of the Univerſe has no need of bodily organs to hear the complaints and prayers of men*. The temple ſtood within a large incloſure in the midſt of a ſacred wood; the entrance into it was through a portico of twenty pillars of oriental granate; the gate was of braſs finely carved, and was adorned on the ſides with two large figures, the one repreſenting Truth, the other Juſtice. The fabric was an immenſe arch, which let in light only at the

* *Plut. of Iſis and Oſiris.*

top, in order to hide from the eye all objects abroad except the heavens. The inside was a peristyle of porphyry and Numidian marble: at certain distances one from another were several altars consecrated to the celestial gods, with the statues of terrestrial divinities between the pillars; the dome was covered on the outside with plates of silver, and adorned on the inside with the images of heroes, who had been deified for their merit.

Cyrus entered this temple; the silence and majesty of the place filled him with awe and respect: he prostrated himself and adored the Divinity present: he had learnt from Zoroaster that the Jupiter Olympius of the Greeks was the same with the Oromazes of the Persians, and the Osiris of the Egyptians. He then cast his eye over all the wonders of art which beautified this place; he was less struck with the richness and magnificence of the altars, than with the nobleness and expression of the statues: as he had learnt the Greek Mythology, he could easily distinguish all the divinities, and discern the mysteries couched in the allegorical figures that were before him. What drew his attention more especially, was to see that each of the celestial deities held in his hand a golden tablet; upon these tablets were written the exalted ideas of Minos in religion, and the several answers which the oracle had given that law-giver, when he con-

ſulted them about the nature of the gods, and the worſhip they required.

Upon the tablet of Jupiter Olympius were to be read theſe words: 'I give being, life 'and motion to all creatures*; no one can 'know me but he who ſeeks to reſemble me†.' Upon that of Pallas: 'the gods make them-'ſelves known to the heart, and conceal them-'ſelves from thoſe who endeavour to compre-'hend them by the underſtanding alone‡.' Upon that of the goddeſs Urania: 'The divine 'laws are not chains to fetter us, but wings to 'raiſe us to the bright Olympius§.' Upon that of the Pythian Apollo was this ancient oracle: 'The gods take leſs delight to dwell in heaven 'than in the ſoul of the juſt, which is their 'true temple‖.' While Cyrus was meditating on the ſublime ſenſe of theſe inſcriptions, a venerable old man entered the temple, proſtrated himſelf before the ſtatue of Harpocrates, and remained there a long time in profound ſilence. Cyrus ſuſpected it to be Pythagoras, but durſt not interrupt his devotion. Pythagoras (for it was he) having paid his homage to the gods, roſe up and perceived the two ſtrangers: he imagined, that in the air and mien of Cyrus he ſaw the ſame marks which Solon

* Ζῶσιν δ' ἐν αὐτῷ πνοὴ, ζωὴ καὶ ἔμφυτον. *Epimen.* See Hammond on Acts of Apoſt. chap. xvii. *ver.* 28. † *Plat. Epinom.* ‡ *Ibid.* § *Plat. de Rep.* ‖ *Hierocl. aur. carm.*

had deſcribed, when he gave him notice of the young prince's intended voyage to Crete; he accoſted him with a ſalutation, and made himſelf known.

The Samian ſage, that he might not diſturb the ſilence which ought to be obſerved in a place dedicated to the adoration of the immortal gods, led Cyrus and Araſpes into the ſacred wood adjoining to the temple. Cyrus then ſaid to him: What I have ſeen upon the golden tablets gives me a high notion of your religion; I made haſte to come hither, not only to be inſtructed in the laws of Minos, but to learn from you the doctrine of Orpheus about the golden age; I am told that it reſembles that of the Perſians concerning the empire of Oromazes, and that of the Egyptians relating to the reign of Oſiris; it is a pleaſure to ſee the traces of thoſe great truths in all nations; vouchſafe to unfold to me your ancient traditions. Solon, replied Pythagoras, acquainted me with your deſign of coming into this iſland; I was going to Croton, but I have put off my voyage to have the pleaſure of ſeeing a hero, whoſe birth and conqueſts have been foretold by the oracles of almoſt all nations: I will conceal nothing from you of the myſteries of wiſdom, becauſe I know that you will one day be the law-giver of Aſia as well as its conqueror. After this they ſat down near a ſtatue of Minos in the ſacred wood, and the philoſopher rehearſed

to them all the mythology of the first Greeks, making use of the poetic stile of Orpheus, which by its paintings and images rendered sensible the sublimest truths.

* In the golden age the inhabitants of the earth lived in a perfect innocence: such as are the Elysian fields for heroes, such was then the happy abode of men; the intemperature of the air, and the war of the elements were unknown; the North winds were not yet come forth from their deep grottos; the zephyrs only enlivened all things with their soft and gentle breezes; neither the scorching heats of Summer, nor the severities of Winter were ever felt; the Spring crowned with flowers, and the Autumn loaded with fruits, reigned together; death, diseases and crimes durst not approach these happy places. The soul was not then imprisoned in a gross mortal body as it is now; it was united to a luminous, heavenly, ethereal body†, which served it as a vehicle to fly through the air, rise to the stars, and wander over all the regions of immensity. Sometimes those first men reposing themselves in odoriferous groves, tasted all the

* *See the Discourse on the Theology of the Pagans.*

† *The Pythagoreans and Platonists, called this subtile vehicle of the soul,* Σῶμα αὐγοειδὲς ὀχῆμα, αἰθέριον. *See Cudworth, p. 785. to p. 800.*

pureſt pleaſures of friendſhip; ſometimes they ſat at the table of the gods, and were feaſted with nectar and ambroſia; at other times Jupiter, attended by all the divinities, mounted his winged chariot, and conducted them above the heavens. The poets have not celebrated, nor known that * HIGHEST PLACE; it was there that ſouls beheld truth, juſtice and wiſdom in their ſource, it was there that with the eyes of the pure ſpirit they contemplated the firſt Eſſence, of whoſe brightneſs Jupiter and the other gods are but ſo many rays; there they were nouriſhed with beholding that object, till being no longer able to ſupport its ſplendor, they deſcended again to their ordinary abode. The deities at that time took a pleaſure in converſing with men; the ſhepherdeſſes were loved by the gods, and the goddeſſes did not diſdain the love of ſhepherds; the graces accompanied them every where, and theſe graces were the virtues themſelves; but alas! this golden age was of no long duration.

One day men neglected to follow Jupiter's chariot, ſtayed in the fields of Hecate, got drunk with nectar, loſt their taſte for pure truth, and ſeparated the love of pleaſure from the love of order. The ſhepherdeſſes viewed themſelves in fountains, and became idolaters of their own beauty; each had her thoughts

* Τόπος ὑπερουράνιος. *See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

wholly taken up about herſelf; Love forſook the earth, and together with him all the celeſtial divinities diſappeared: the Sylvan gods were changed into Satyrs, the Napæan into Bacchæ, and the Nayads into Syrens; the virtues and the graces were no longer the ſame; and Self-love, the parent of all vices, begot Senſuality, the ſource of all miſeries. Nature was quickly transformed in this lower ſphere: the ſun had no longer the ſame force, nor the ſame mildneſs, its light was obſcured; our globe fell to ruins, the abyſs was opened and overflowed; it was divided by ſeas into iſlands and continents; the fruitful hills became craggy rocks, and the delightful valleys frightful precipices: nothing remained but ruins of the old world drowned in the waters. The wings of the ſoul were clipt; its ſubtile vehicle was broken; and ſpirits were thrown down into mortal bodies, where they undergo divers tranſmigrations, till they are purged of their crimes by expiatory pains. † The ethereal body was contracted, impriſoned, and buried in a living ſepulchre, a coarſe covering, which is ever changing, which does not continue one moment the ſame, and is ſomething merely accidental to our ſubſtance: the immortal ſeed, the incorruptible body, the ſubtile vehicle is at pre-

† *See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

ſent the ſeat of the ſoul, and the channel of communication between the pure ſpirit and the groſs body, the hidden ſpring of all the motions and operations of our walking carcaſs. It was thus that the iron age ſucceeded to the golden, and it will laſt ten thouſand years; during which time Saturn conceals himſelf in an inacceſſible retreat; but in the end he will reſume the reins of his empire, and reſtore the univerſe to its original ſplendor: all ſouls will then be reunited to their principle. This, continued Pythagoras, is the allegory by which Orpheus has made us underſtand the firſt condition of man, and the miſery into which he is fallen. Our mortal body is the puniſhment of our crimes, and the diſorder of our heart is an evident proof of our being degraded.

I perceive, ſaid Cyrus, that the principles of Zoroaſter, Hermes and Orpheus are the ſame: their allegories abound with the ſublimeſt truths; why then will your prieſts reduce all to an outward worſhip? They have ſpoken to me of Jupiter only as of a law-giver, who promiſes his nectar and ambroſia, not to ſolid virtues, but to the belief of certain opinions, and the obſervance of ſome ceremonies which are of no uſe either to enlighten the mind, or to purify the heart. The corruption and avarice of the prieſts, replied Pythagoras, is the ſource of all theſe miſchiefs. The miniſters of the gods, who were eſtabliſhed at firſt to make men

good, turn the prieſthood into a vile trade; they mind only the outward ſhew of religion. The vulgar, not underſtanding the myſterious meaning of the ſacred rites, fall into a groſs ſuperſtition, while the bold wits give themſelves up to impiety. Some deſpiſe even the pureſt antiquity; others deny the neceſſity of an outward worſhip; others arraign the eternal Wiſdom, becauſe of the evils and crimes which happen here below. Anaximander and his audacious ſchool actually ſpread abroad at this time throughout all Greece, that God and nature are the ſame thing. Every one forms a ſyſtem after his own faſhion, without reſpecting the doctrine of the ancients.

When Cyrus heard him name Anaximander, he ſaid to him, I have been informed of the cauſe of your diſgrace and exile; and have a great deſire to know the particulars of your diſpute with that Mileſian philoſopher; tell me in what manner you combated this doctrine. It may help very much to preſerve me from thoſe dangerous maxims. I have already ſeen at Ecbatan ſeveral Magi who talked the ſame language with Anaximander: the errors of the human mind are pretty near the ſame in all countries and in all times. The particulars of that diſpute, anſwered Pythagoras, will be long, but I ſhall not affect to ſhorten them leſt I ſhould become obſcure. Upon my return to Samos, continued the philoſopher, after my

long travels, I found that Anaximander, who was now advanced in years, had spread every where his impious doctrine: the young people had embraced it; the love of novelty, the inclination to flatter their passions, the vanity of thinking themselves wiser than other men, had blinded their understandings and drawn them into these errors. In order to remedy these mischiefs, I attacked the principles of the Milesian; he made me be cited before a tribunal of Pontifs in the temple of Apollo, where the king and all the people of the city were assembled; he began by representing my doctrine under the most odious form, gave false and malicious turns to my words, and endeavoured to make me suspected of the impiety of which he himself was guilty. I then rose up and spoke in the following manner.

O King! image of the great Jupiter! priests of Apollo! and you citizens of Samos! hearken to me and judge of my innocence; I have travelled among all the different nations of the universe to learn wisdom, which is only to be found in the tradition of the ancients; I have discovered, that from the origin of things men adored but one sole eternal principle; that all the gods of Greece are but different names to express the attributes of the Deity, or the properties of nature, which is the image of him. All that we can conceive of the supreme essence presents itself to the mind under the

three forms of goodness, wisdom and power; the sovereign good, the principle of all beings; the intelligence which designed the plan of the world and the energy which executed it. The Orientals call these three forms † OROMASES, MYTHRA and MYTHRAS; the Egyptians OSIRIS, ISIS and ORUS; the Thracians URANUS, URANIA and LOVE; the Tyrians BELUS, VENUS and THAMMUZ; the Greeks JUPITER, MINERVA and APOLLO. Sometimes we represent these three forms of the Divinity by the principal parts of nature, as the sun, the moon and the earth, and we call them RHOMBUS, PHORBE and PAN; at other times by the elements of fire, air and water, and we stile them VULCAN, JUNO and NEPTUNE; one while by that prolific virtue which produces wine, corn, and fruits, and they are called BACCHUS, CERES and VERTUMNUS; often by the justice they exercise in the infernal regions, and they bear the names of PLUTO, PROSERPINE and MINOS: moreover the first form of the Divinity is represented by his eternity as he is the most ancient of all beings, and we call it COELUS, CHRONUS and SATURN: the second form by his fecundity as containing the seeds of all things, and we stile it RHEA, VESTA and CYBELE: the third

† *See the Discourse on the Theology of the Pagans.*

form by the authority he exerciſes in the government of the world, and we call it Mars as the arbiter of war, MERCURY as the ambaſſador of the ſupreme God, HERCULES as a hero who purges the earth of monſters. Thus we expreſs the three attributes of the Deity which comprehend the totality of his nature by the original father the author of all beings, the immortal virgin the mother of nature, and the ſon of Jupiter the emanation from thoſe two principles. † All theſe names nevertheleſs denote but one and the ſame power which drew all beings viſible and inviſible out of nothing; but mankind have confounded the work with the artificer, the image with the original, the ſhadow with the ſubſtance; they have forgotten the ancient doctrine, they have loſt the meaning of our allegories, and ſtop at the outward ſymbols without entring into the ſpirit of them: this is the ſource of thoſe numberleſs errors which prevail at preſent throughout all Greece, degrade religion, and render it contemptible. Moreover I find that it is a ſtedfaſt maxim in all nations, that men are not what they were in the golden age, that they are debaſed and degraded, and that religion is the only means to reſtore the ſoul to its original grandeur, to make her wings grow again, and

† *See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

to raiſe her to the etherial regions from whence ſhe is fallen. It is neceſſary firſt to become man by civil and ſocial virtues, and then to reſemble the gods by that love of the SOVEREIGN BEAUTY, ORDER and PERFECTION, which makes us love virtue for itſelf: this is the only worſhip worthy of the immortals, and this is all my doctrine.

Anaximander then roſe up in the midſt of the aſſembly; his age, talents and reputation gained him a ſilent and univerſal attention. Pythagoras, ſaid he, deſtroys religion by his refinements; his love of ORDER is a chimera; let us conſult nature, let us ſearch into all the ſecret receſſes of man's heart, let us interrogate men of all nations, we ſhall find that ſelf-love is the ſource of all our actions, all our paſſions, and even all our virtues: Pythagoras loſes himſelf in his abſtract reaſonings; I keep to ſimple nature, and there I find my principles: the feeling and ſentiment of all hearts authoriſes my doctrine, and this kind of proof is the ſhorteſt and moſt convincing.

Anaximander, anſwered I, ſubſtitutes irregular paſſions in the room of noble ſentiments, he always repreſents what men ordinarily do, as the ſtandard of what they ought to do; but the weakneſs of nature blinded and enfeebled by the paſſions is not the rule of nature enlightened and fortified by the ſovereign reaſon; he affirms boldly, but he proves nothing; this

is not my method; my proofs are these, they seem to me clear and solid. The sovereign will of the great Jupiter ought to be the universal rule of our will; he loves all beings more or less, in proportion to their resemblance with him; it is the degree of this resemblance which constitutes the beauty, truth and goodness of each intelligence. The father of gods and men loves himself as the sovereign good, and all other beings as his emanations; and this should be our rule: self-love, to be regular, must be the effect and not the cause of our love for the supreme good; the love of the INFINITELY GREAT should be the ground of our love for the INFINITELY LITTLE; the love of the original, the motive of our love for the pictures. This is the eternal law, the immutable order, and the love of the sovereign beauty.

Anaximander interrupted me with a disdainful smile and answered; Pythagoras imposes upon you by words without meaning, by abstracted ideas that are of no use in social life, by chimeras hatched in the empty brain of idle sophists who exhaust themselves in vain speculations; what is this eternal law? this order conformable to it? this love of the sovereign beauty with which he continually dazzles our eyes? let him explain himself clearly, and all his fine-spun notions will vanish into smoke.

* The law, replied I, is the intelligence which produced all things, the ſovereign reaſon of the great Jupiter, the divine Minerva who inceſſantly ſprings from his head. The order conformable to this law is founded upon the different degrees of reality which the All-producing Spirit has given to his works, the immutable relations and eſſential differences which are between them. The love conformable to this order is to prefer that which is more perfect to that which is leſs ſo, not only in all kinds but in the ſeveral ſpecies and individuals†. Laſtly, the ſovereign beauty has no perfect ſimilitude with any thing we behold on earth, or in the heavens; whatever elſe is beautiful is only ſo by a participation of its beauty; all other beauties may increaſe, decay, change or periſh, but this is ſtill the ſame in all times and in all places; it is by contemplating the different degrees of tranſient, variable and finite beauty, and by carrying our thoughts beyond them all, that we at length reach to that ſupreme Beauty which is ſimple, pure, uniform, immutable, without colour, figure or human qualities. Anaximander pretends that this doctrine is a chimerical idea, and a vain refinement which has no influence in ſo-

* *See Hierocles on the golden verſes of Pythagoras, p.* 14.

† *See Plat. feaſt. ed. Steph. p.* 211.

cial life, but all the philoſophers and legiſlators have thought otherwiſe; Hermes, Orpheus and Minos laid it down as a fundamental principle that a man muſt prefer the public good to his private intereſt from the ſole love of goodneſs, juſtice, and perfection: it was to this order that Codrus thought himſelf bound to ſacrifice not only his crown but his life; his view in conforming to this order was not to render himſelf happy, on the contrary he believed it his duty to devote himſelf to death, and to make no account of himſelf becauſe the love of order exacted it. If we can love nothing but with reference to ourſelves, each member of ſociety will come by degrees to conſider himſelf as an independent being made for himſelf; there will be no reaſon to ſacrifice private intereſt to public good; noble ſentiments and heroic virtues will be deſtroyed: nor is this all, every concealed crime will ſoon be authoriſed; if virtue be not amiable for itſelf, each man will forſake it when he can hide himſelf from the eyes of the public; he will commit all crimes without remorſe when intereſt carries him to it, and he is not with-held by fear; and thus is all ſociety diſſolved; whether therefore you conſider religion or policy, both conſpire to prove my doctrine.

Here Anaximander anſwered: Pythagoras is unacquainted with the nature of the ſoul; the deſire of happineſs conſtitutes the eſſence

of the will; pleaſure is the great law both of mortal and immortal natures, its attractive force is irreſiſtible, and it is the only moving ſpring of man's heart; the ſight of perfection acts upon us only by the pleaſing ſenſation it cauſes in us.

We always love with pleaſure, anſwered I, but we do not always love for the ſake of pleaſure. As the delight which accompanies the perception of truth is not the reaſon why we acquieſce in truth, ſo the pleaſure which accompanies the view of order is not the reaſon why we love juſtice. That which determines the pure act of the will, both in the one and the other caſe, is the perception of the immutable relations, and eſſential differences between beings; to know theſe relations and theſe differences is truth; to act according to theſe relations and differences is virtue. We may follow juſtice for the good it procures us, but we cannot love it but for itſelf, that only, for the ſake of which we love, being properly the object of our love*. As the moſt unjuſt of all men would be he, who, while he committed all ſorts of crimes, ſhould paſs for juſt, and ſo enjoy the honours of virtue and the pleaſures of vice; ſo the perfectly juſt man would be he who ſhould love juſtice for itſelf, and not for the honours and pleaſures which accompany

* *See Plat. Rep. lib. 2. p. 36.*

it; who ſhould paſs for unjuſt while he practiſed the moſt exact juſtice; who ſhould not ſuffer himſelf to be moved by ignominy, diſtreſs, or the moſt cruel ſufferings, but ſhould continue ſtedfaſt in the love of juſtice, not becauſe it is delightful, but becauſe it is juſt. It is thus that the gods do good from the pure love of good; the ſoul is an image of their ſubſtance, conſequently ſhe may imitate them, and love virtue for itſelf; the perception of truth may act as ſtrongly upon her as the ſenſation of pleaſure.

Ever ſince the iron age began, men are ſo blinded that they do not comprehend this ſublime love of virtue; the philoſophers themſelves arrive to it but by ſlow degrees; wiſdom, in purifying the heart, accommodates herſelf to the weakneſs of our diſtempered and imperfect nature*. The divine Themis inebriates us at firſt with heavenly delights to counterbalance in us the weight of terreſtrial pleaſures. She allures us by a ſweet ſmile, enchants us by her looks all charming, tranſports us by the amiable truths ſhe preſents to the mind; we then adhere to virtue for the ſake of thoſe ſweets that accompany it: but in proportion as the ſoul withdraws from outward objects, her love becomes more exalted,

* *See Plotinus, Pſellus, Jamblichus, Porphyry and the Platoniſts of the third century, when they ſpeak of the purification of the ſoul.*

more delicate and more generous; ſhe enters deeply into herſelf, concentres all her powers, and retires into her ſpiritual nature; ſhe ſees all the windings and turnings of the heart, ſhe diſcovers all the enormities of her ſelf-love, which made her refer all her virtues to herſelf, and practiſe them only out of vanity, that ſhe might become the idol of men by an uſurpation upon the rights of the gods; ſhe ſuffers inexpreſſible pains to expiate theſe ſecret iniquities; ſhe at length gets out of herſelf, riſes above herſelf, ſeparates and diſengages herſelf from every thing, that ſhe may be united to the immutable Beauty, and behold him with that eye with which alone he can be ſeen; then it is that ſhe brings forth not the ſhadows of virtue, but the virtues themſelves, ſhe becomes immortal and the friend of God*. Such is the immutable law of Themis, the human virtues are acquired with pleaſure, but deification only by ſufferings, and by being ſtript of every thing that is mortal and terreſtrial in us. It was thus that Hercules found exquiſite pleaſures in his twelve labours, and in all the exploits of an heroic virtue; but he was not deified till he had paſſed through the purifying flames of Themis, which your poets have repreſented by thoſe of his funeral-pile on Mount Oeta. They conſumed the poiſoned robe of

* *Plato's feaſt, p.* 212.

the centaur, of the monſter Typhon, and of the evil principle, which that ſon of Jupiter had put on to give us an example of perfect virtue; in the midſt of the devouring flames he rejoiced at the deſtruction of all that he had received from his mother Alcmene; the ſight of the immutable order ſo raviſhed and tranſported him out of himſelf, that he could not give a thought to his own happineſs.

Here Anaximander cried out with fury, Pythagoras is ignorant of the hiſtory of the gods, he ſays we muſt reſemble them, they ſwim in delights above, and deſcend upon earth only to pleaſe themſelves with the terreſtrial goddeſſes; Jupiter himſelf is an inſtance of it; to imitate them is to purſue pleaſure; Pythagoras artfully endeavours to create in you a brutal indifference for the feaſt of the gods, make you deſpiſe nectar and ambroſia, and deſtroy in you the invincible deſire of happineſs natural to all intelligences; I give you warning of the horrible conſequences of his ſyſtem, beware of his ſophiſtry.

† Juſtice, replied I with an intrepid air, is amiable for itſelf; if we love it only for the advantages it procures us, we are not good, but politic; it is the higheſt injuſtice to love juſtice only for the ſake of reward; to aſpire

† *See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

to the table of the gods merely to pleaſe and delight ourſelves, is not to love the ſovereign good, it is to degrade it and make it ſubſervient to our intereſt. It was thus that ſouls fell from the ſublime place in heaven, they loved nectar and ambroſia more than truth, and ſeparated the love of pleaſure from the love of order. To love the ſovereign BEAUTY only as beneficent, is to love him for the finite participation of his gifts; it is to love him for what he does in us, and not for what he is in himſelf; it is to ſeparate the ſovereign goodneſs from the ſupreme juſtice; to love the immutable BEAUTY for his perfection, is to love him for his immenſe totality; it is to love him for what we know of him, and not for what we feel of him; it is to love without meaſure the Being without limits; and it is this love which dilates, elevates, deifies, and gives a kind of immenſity to the ſoul. I maintain therefore with all the ancients that we are not to deſire admittance to the table of the gods, but as a ſtate in which we are united to the ſovereign BEAUTY, transformed into his image and perfected in his love. Is Olympus leſs the object of our deſire, becauſe we deſire it from a motive worthy of the gods? Do we love the gods the leſs, becauſe we prefer their friendſhip to the nectar that is drunk at their table?

O Samians! Anaximander endeavours not only to cloud your minds, but to corrupt your

manners; he deceives you by ſticking to the literal ſenſe of your Mythology. The gods who are exempt from human frailties do not deſcend upon earth to ſatisfy any paſſions; all that wiſe antiquity tells us of the amours of Jupiter and the other divinities, are but an ingenious allegory to repreſent the pure communications of the gods with mortals ſince the iron age. Your philoſophers always deſcribe virtue to us as a divine energy deſcending from heaven, they continually ſpeak of guardian deities, who inſpire, enlighten and ſtrengthen us, to ſhew that heroic virtues can proceed from the gods alone; but thoſe poets who ſeek only to pleaſe and to ſtrike the imagination by heaping wonders upon wonders, have disfigured your Mythology by their fictions.

Here Anaximander cried out again with an air of zeal and enthuſiaſm; Will you ſuffer, O Samians, your religion to be thus deſtroyed, by turning its myſteries into allegories, blaſpheming againſt the ſacred books of your poets, and denying the moſt undoubted facts of tradition? Pythagoras overthrows your altars, your temples and your prieſthood, that he may lead you to impiety, under pretence of deſtroying ſuperſtition. A confuſed murmur immediately aroſe in the aſſembly; they were divided in their ſentiments; the greateſt part of the prieſts called me impious, and an enemy of religion. Perceiving then the deep diſſimu-

lation of Anaximander, and the blind zeal of the people who were deluded by ſophiſtry, it was impoſſible for me to contain myſelf, and raiſing my voice, I ſaid:

O king, prieſts and Samians, hearken to me for the laſt time. I would not at firſt lay open the myſteries of Anaximander's monſtrous ſyſtem, nor endeavour in a public aſſembly to render his perſon odious as he has laboured to do mine; hitherto I have reſpected his grey hairs, but now that I ſee the pit of deſtruction into which he ſeeks to hurry you, I can no longer be ſilent without being falſe to the gods and to my country. Anaximander ſeems to you to be zealous for religion, but in reality he endeavours to deſtroy it. Hear what his principles are, which he teaches in ſecret to thoſe who will liſten to him. There is nothing in the univerſe but matter and motion; in the fruitful boſom of an infinite matter every thing is produced by an eternal revolution of forms; the deſtruction of ſome is the birth of others; the different ranging of the atoms is what alone makes the different ſorts of minds, but all is diſſipated and plunged again into the ſame abyſs after death. According to Anaximander, that which is now ſtone, wood, metal, may be diſſolved and transformed not only into water, air and pure flame, but into rational ſpirit; according to him our own idle fears have dug the infernal pit, and our own ſcared

imagination is the ſource of thoſe famous rivers which flow in gloomy Tartarus; our ſuperſtition has peopled the coeleſtial regions with gods and demi-gods, and it is our vanity which makes us imagine that we ſhall one day drink nectar with them; according to him goodneſs and malice, virtue and vice, juſtice and injuſtice, are but names which we give to things as they pleaſe or diſpleaſe us; men are born vicious or virtuous, as tygers are born fierce, and lambs mild; all is the effect of an invincible fatality, and we think that we chooſe only becauſe the ſweetneſs of pleaſure hides the force which irreſiſtibly draws us. This, O Samians, is the dreadful precipice to which he would lead you.

While I was ſpeaking, the gods declared themſelves. Before the diſpute the high prieſt of Delphos had been conſulted about my doctrine; his deciſions are always agreeable to the will of the great Apollo; the anſwer he ſent to the prieſts of Samos was this; 'You 'accuſe Pythagoras of erring through an ex-'ceſs of love for the ſupreme Beauty, and I 'accuſe you of erring through a want of 'friendſhip for your fellow citizen; the god 'whom I ſerve equally abhors thoſe who aſpire 'not to the pleaſures of Olympus, and thoſe 'who deſire them only to gratify their paſſi-'ons; mortals have often need to think of 'nectar and ambroſia, in order to reject the

'enchanting cup of Circe which transforms 'men into hogs; but when the goddess Mi-'nerva descends into heroes, they perform 'noble actions from noble motives; pure 'pleasures accompany them, glory environs 'them, immortality follows them, but virtue 'is alone their object.' Scarce had they read this answer of the pontif, when a divine voice seemed to come from the innermost part of the temple, and to say, '† The gods do good for 'the sole love of good, you cannot honour 'them worthily but by resembling them.' The priests and the multitude, who were more struck with the prodigy than they had been with the truth, changed their sentiments and declared in my favour. Anaximander perceived it, and imagining that I had corrupted the pontifs in order to delude the people, hid himself under a new kind of hypocrisy, and said to the assembly, The oracle has spoken and I must be silent: I believe, but I am not yet enlightened; my heart is touched, but my understanding is not convinced; I desire to discourse with Pythagoras in private, and to be instructed by his reasonings. Being moved and softened with Anaximander's seeming sincerity, I embraced him with tears of joy in the presence of the king and the pontifs, and conducted him to my own house. The impious

† *See Hier. aur. carm.*

wretch, imagining that it was impoſſible for a man of ſenſe not to think as he did, believed that I affected this zeal for religion only to throw a miſt before the eyes of the people and gain their ſuffrages. We were no ſooner alone than he changed his ſtile and ſaid to me:

The diſpute between us is reduced to this queſtion; whether the eternal Nature acts with wiſdom or deſign, or takes all ſorts of forms by a blind neceſſity: let us not dazzle our eyes with vulgar prejudices; a philoſopher cannot believe but when he is forced to it by a complete evidence; I reaſon only upon what I ſee, and I ſee nothing in all nature but an immenſe matter and an infinite activity; this active matter is eternal; now an infinite active force muſt, in an eternal duration, of neceſſity give all ſorts of forms to an immenſe matter; it has had other forms than what we ſee at preſent, and it will take new ones; every thing has changed, and does change, and will change, and this is ſufficient for the production not only of this world, but of numberleſs worlds inviſible to us.

What you offer, replied I, is nothing but ſophiſtry inſtead of proof. You ſee nothing in all nature, ſay you, but an infinite activity and an immenſe matter; I allow it; but does it follow from thence, that the infinite activity is a property of matter? Matter is eternal (add you) and it may be ſo, becauſe the infi-

nite force which is always acting may have always produced it; but do you conclude from thence that it is the only existing substance? I shall agree also that an all-powerful, active force may in an eternal duration give all sorts of forms to an immense matter; but is this a proof that that force acts by a blind necessity and without design? Though I should admit your principles, I must deny your consequences, which seem to me absolutely false. My reasons are these:

The idea which we have of matter does not include that of active force; matter does not cease to be matter when in perfect rest; it cannot restore motion to itself when it has lost it; from whence I conclude that it is not active of itself, and consequently that infinite force is not one of its properties. Further, I perceive in myself and in several beings with which I am encompassed, a reasoning principle which feels, thinks, compares and judges: motion only changes the situation or figure of bodies; now it is absurd to suppose that matter without thought and sensation can become sensible and intelligent, merely by shifting its place, or changing its figure; there is no connexion between these ideas; I allow that the quickness of our sensations depends often upon the motion of the humours in the body, and this proves that spirit and body may be united, but by no means that they are the same; and from

the whole I conclude, that there is in nature another ſubſtance beſides matter, and conſequently that there may be a ſovereign intellect much ſuperior to mine, to yours, and to thoſe of all other men. In order to know whether there be ſuch an intellect, I ſally out of myſelf, I run over all the wonders of the univerſe, I obſerve the conſtancy and regularity of its laws, the fruitfulneſs and variety of its productions, the connexion and ſuitableneſs of its parts, the conformation of animals, the ſtructure of plants, the order of the elements, and the revolutions of the heavenly bodies: I cannot doubt but that all is the effect of art, contrivance and a ſupreme wiſdom. I then draw a vail over all the beings with which I am incompaſſed; I conſider them only as phantoms, mere appearances and illuſions; I ſhut my eyes, I ſtop my ears, I return again into myſelf, to conſider that reaſoning principle which I have already proved not to be material, which might ſubſiſt though all bodies were annihilated, and which ſhews me all objects without preſenting itſelf to my view. Since there cannot be an eternal ſucceſſion of effects without a cauſe, it follows neceſſarily that he who made this intelligent principle muſt be himſelf intelligent; hence I conclude that the INFINITE FORCE which you acknowledge to be in nature is a SOVEREIGN INTELLIGENCE. When I thus return into

myself, I again perceive the great Jupiter whom you would hide from my eyes; I find myself at present alone with him, he is sufficient to me, he continually acts upon me, he is the cause of all my sensations and of all my thoughts; he can represent numberless worlds to me, though there were nothing in all nature but he and I. Earth, air and heaven, planets and stars, universal nature, I behold you no more; vain shadows, imperfect images, disfigured pictures, you are vanished away, I perceive nothing but your original and your cause, I am swallowed up, I lose myself in his bosom, and I need only feel my own being to be convinced of his.

I remember, said Cyrus, that Zoroaster laid open to me all these truths: A superficial view of the wonders of the universe might leave the mind in some uncertainty, but when we descend to particulars, when we enter into the sanctuary of nature, and study its secrets, laws and effects to the bottom, when we are well acquainted with ourselves, and compare what we feel within us with what we see without us, it is impossible any longer to hesitate: I do not see how Anaximander could resist the force of your arguments.

He answered me, Your reasoning is plausible, but has no solidity in it; you always shun the main question by the dextrous agility of your mind. I agree with you, that there

cannot be an eternal ſucceſſion of effects without a * firſt cauſe; this would be an infinite chain hanging upon nothing, an immenſe weight without a ſupport; I likewiſe allow that the idea of matter does not include that of active force, as the idea of active force does not include that of wiſdom; becauſe the different attributes of one and the ſame eſſence may be ſeparately conceived. Laſtly, I grant that bodies do not become intelligent by changing of place and figure; but you aſcribe to matter properties which it has not: matter and extenſion are the ſame thing †; now you know that extenſion has neither colour, nor ſmell, nor taſte; and I add, that it has neither fixed bounds, nor diſtinct parts, nor real motions: all theſe qualities are but ideas ‡, or perceptions of the ſoul, cauſed by the action of the immenſe § extenſion, which ſhews itſelf ſucceſſively to us under different forms: this principle being laid down my real doctrine is this. We cannot baniſh from our minds the ideas of eternity, immenſity and infinity, they

* *Spinoza never ſuppoſed an eternal ſucceſſion of ſecond cauſes without a firſt. He confutes that opinion by Mr. Wollaſton's argument, which is the ſame that Anaximander uſes here. See Spin. Epiſt. 29.*

† *Deſcartes.* ‡ *Dr. Berkley.*

§ *F. Malebranche.*

every where present themselves to us; we can explain nothing without them; these three properties are therefore the attributes of some eternal, immense and * absolutely infinite Being; there can be no other † substance but his, it is one and it is all; it is the universal being, and is both ‡ extended and intellectual; what makes the § diversity of beings is not any real distinction of substance, but the difference of form; the ‖ eternal nature acts continually within itself, by itself and upon itself, according to the whole extent of its infinite power, and thereby necessarily produces all sorts of forms; this boundless †† power is

* *Spinoza says expresly the same things, Deus est Ens absolutè infinitum.* † *Praeter Deum nulla dari neque concipi potest substantia.*

‡ *Cogitatio est attributum Dei sive Deus est res cogitans. Extensio est attributum Dei, sive Deus est res extensa. Substantia cogitans et substantia extensa una eademque est substantia, quae jam sub hoc jam sub illo attributo concipitur.*

§ *Res particulares nihil sunt nisi Dei attributorum modi.*

‖ *Ex necessitate naturae divinae infinita infinitis modis sequi debent. Deus est omnium rerum causa immanens, non vero transiens.*

†† *Intellectus, voluntas, amor ad modos Dei sive entia particularia pertinent, non ad substantiam aeternam et infinitam. Vid. Spin. Eth.*

not reſtrained by thoſe rules which are called wiſdom, goodneſs and juſtice, for theſe belong to finite beings, and by no means to the infinite. Let me ſee you attack this ſyſtem with ſolid reaſons, without ſeeking to dazzle my eyes with metaphors, allegories and the looſe declamations of an orator.

I anſwered; If you only maintained, that all eſſences are but different forms of the divine eſſence, that our ſouls are portions of the ſoul of the world, and our bodies parts of his immenſe extenſion, you would not be an atheiſt, but you would hold abſurdities with many other * philoſophers who have a ſincere abhorrence of all impiety. They ſuppoſe as you do that there is in all nature but one ſubſtance, that the whole univerſe is an emanation from the divine eſſence, or an expanſion of it; but they believe that there is an infinite Spirit who preſides over all ſpirits, a ſovereign wiſdom that governs the world, a ſupreme goodneſs that loves all its productions; they never imagined as you do, that the one only ſubſtance acts without intelligence or juſtice,

Part 1. *Def.* 6. *Prop.* 8, 13, 16, 18, 25, 31. *et Part* 2. *Prop.* 1, 2, 7, 10. *et Scholia.*

* *It was the opinion of the Stoicks, of ſome of the diſciples of Orpheus, and of the ancient Pantheiſts, and is held by ſome of the modern Chineſe. See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

without knowing or having any regard to the immutable relations and eſſential differences between beings; your atheiſm lyes there; and what proof do you offer for your opinion? in order to demonſtrate and convince, is it enough to heap propoſition upon propoſition, take for granted, and affirm boldly?

He replied with an haughty aſſurance, my whole ſyſtem turns upon this ſingle † principle, that there is but one only ſubſtance in nature; this being demonſtrated, all the reſt follows by neceſſary and unavoidable conſequence. Now this great principle I prove thus; when the eternal Being produces new ſubſtances, he gives them ſomething or nothing; if he gives them nothing, he will never produce any thing, if he gives them a part of his own eſſence, he does not produce a new ſubſtance, but a new form; this is demonſtration: provided the unity of ſubſtance be not deſtroyed, it is indifferent to me how it is called, whether ſoul or body, ſpirit or matter, intelligent or intelligible extenſion ‡.

† *All Spinoza's book, his definitions, axioms, propoſitions, corollaries and ſcholia tend to prove this principle or flow from it; this once deſtroyed, all his ſyſtem falls to the ground.*

‡ *This is the uſe which the Spinoziſts have made of the ſyſtems maintained by Deſcartes, Malebranche, and Dr. Berkley, contrary to the*

When the great Jupiter, ſaid I, creates, he does not draw a being out of nothing, as out of a ſubject which contains in it ſome reality, neither does he divide his eſſence to make a ſeparate ſubſtance of it, but he makes ſomething exiſt which did not exiſt before: now to make a ſubſtance exiſt which was not before, has nothing in it more inconceivable than to make a form exiſt which was not before; ſince in both caſes there is a new reality produced, and whatever difficulties there are in conceiving the paſſage from non-exiſtence to being, they are as puzzling in the one as in the other:

intention of thoſe three philoſophers. The firſt ſays, that matter and extenſion are the ſame thing; the ſecond affirms, that the immediate object of our ſenſations is an intelligible, eternal, immutable, infinite extenſion; the third endeavours to prove, that there is no ſuch thing as body, that all is ſpirit. Malebranche thinks that Deſcartes does not extend his principle far enough; and Berkley accuſes Malebranche of ſtopping too ſoon: The Spinoziſts pretend to reconcile all three by admitting but one only ſubſtance: it muſt nevertheleſs be allowed that there is an eſſential difference between theſe three philoſophers and Spinoza, ſince they teach that there is a real diſtinction between the infinite Eſſence and created eſſences.

you cannot deny a creating * energy, without denying for the ſame reaſon all active force. Thus your eternal nature is reduced to a formleſs maſs, or to an infinite ſpace without action and power, as well as without wiſdom and goodneſs. Where will you find an active Deity to reduce that chaos to order, or to fill that immenſe ſpace? but I will reſtore you, out of compaſſion, that active principle and that moving force, which you have need of to form your world; I will ſuppoſe, contrary to all reaſon and evidence, that your eternal nature acts as neceſſarily as it exiſts, you will gain nothing by this conceſſion, you will only plunge yourſelf into a new abyſs of contradictions more abſurd and more frightful than the firſt. You cannot deny that there are in nature beings who ſuffer, and others that do not ſuffer, intelligences that are ignorant, and others who have knowledge; ſome who deny, others who affirm, and others who doubt of the ſame things; intelligences who love and hate the ſame objects, and who often change their thoughts, ſentiments and paſſions: now is it conceivable that the ſame immutable, immenſe, infinite ſubſtance ſhould be at the ſame time knowing and ignorant, happy and unhappy, a friend and an enemy of its own nature? Does

* *Plato calls it* Ποιητικὴ δύναμις. *See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

this monſtrous aſſemblage of variable, bounded, fantaſtical and jarring forms ſquare with the attributes you aſcribe to the eternal Nature? You may weaken your underſtanding by too much refining, you may exhauſt yourſelf by ſpinning a thin web of ſophiſms, you may wrap yourſelf up in theſe cobwebs, and endeavour to entangle light fluttering minds in them; but I defy you to conſider attentively the conſequences of your ſyſtem without horror and ſhame: what motive is it that could induce you to prefer the ſyſtem of a blind nature to that of a wiſe intelligence? Do but aſcend to firſt principles, make uſe of that accuracy in which you formerly excelled, and you will find that the infinite Being, which you admit equally with me, is not univerſal being, but a being vaſtly diſtinct from all others; that he has produced new ſubſtances as well as new forms; that he knows himſelf and all his productions; that he loves himſelf eſſentially, and all other beings in proportion to the degrees of reality he has communicated to them; that he is by conſequence ſupremely powerful, wiſe and good; that it is abſurd to conceive what is only power, wiſdom and goodneſs, under the form of length, breadth and thickneſs; that he may exiſt every where without extenſion of parts, as he knows every thing without ſucceſſion of thoughts; that infinite extenſion is not his immenſity, as infinite time is not his eternity;

that ſpace is only the manner in which bodies exiſt in him, as time is only the manner in which created beings exiſt with him; and laſtly, that variable and finite beings are not different forms of his ſubſtance, but free effects of his power. Examine geometrically this chain of conſequences drawn from the idea of the eternal, immenſe, infinite Being; deſcend from the firſt to the laſt, remount from the laſt to the firſt, and you will ſee that they are all of them neceſſarily linked together; every ſtep you take you will diſcern new rays of light, which, when they are all united, form a complete evidence: I challenge you to ſhew me where it fails.

Thrice he eſſayed to ſpeak, and thrice his perplexed mind endeavoured in vain to rally its confuſed ideas; at length he collected all the powers of his underſtanding, and anſwered me thus: The univerſe is full of defects and vices, I ſee every where beings that are unhappy, and wicked; now I cannot conceive how ſufferings and crimes can begin or ſubſiſt under the empire of a being ſupremely good, wiſe and powerful: if he be wiſe he muſt have foreſeen them, if he be powerful he might have hindered them, and if he be good he would have prevented them. Here is therefore as manifeſt a contradiction in your ſyſtem as in mine; you muſt deny that there are crimes and miſeries

in the univerſe, or that there is a ſovereign Wiſdom and Goodneſs that governs it; take your choice.

How, anſwered I, will you deny what you ſee clearly becauſe you do not ſee further? The ſmalleſt light induces us to believe, but the greateſt obſcurity is not a ſufficient reaſon for denying: in this dawn of human life the lights of the underſtanding are too faint to ſhew us truth with a perfect evidence; we only get a glimpſe of it by a chance ray, which ſuffices to conduct us; but it is not ſuch a broad day-light as diſpels all obſcurity. You deny a creating power becauſe you do not conceive how it operates; you reject an eternal Wiſdom becauſe you know not the ſecret reaſons of its conduct; you refuſe to acknowledge a ſovereign Goodneſs becauſe you do not comprehend how evil can ſubſiſt under its government. O Anaximander! is this reaſoning! A thing is not becauſe you do not ſee it? All your difficulties are reduced to this.

You do me injuſtice, replied the wretched old man, who began to waver and to change his ſtile, I neither affirm nor deny any thing, but I doubt of every thing, becauſe I ſee nothing certain, nothing but what is wrapt up in darkneſs; and this obſcurity reduces me to the neceſſity of fluctuating for ever in a ſea of uncertainties; there is no ſuch thing as demonſtra-

on †. It does not follow that a thing is true ecauſe it appears ſo; a mind which is deceiv-d often, may be deceived always; and this oſſibility is alone ſufficient to make me doubt f every thing.

Such is the nature of our underſtanding, re-lied I, that we cannot refuſe to do homage to uth when it is clearly diſcerned, we are for-ed to acquieſce, we are no longer free to doubt: ow this impoſſibility of doubting is what men all conviction, evidence, demonſtration: the ind of man can go no farther. This light rikes with equal force upon all minds, it has n irreſiſtible power over Scythians and Indians, reeks and Barbarians, gods and men; and it an therefore be nothing elſe but a ray of that ternal Wiſdom which enlightens all intelli-ences. This light is the laſt tribunal for try-g our ideas, we cannot appeal from it without eaſing to be reaſonable. To doubt contrary to l reaſon is extravagance; to pretend to doubt hen the evidence makes doubting impoſſible adding inſincerity to folly. See to what a di-emma you are reduced by too much refining; bſerve the inconſtancy of your mind and the nconſiſtency of your reaſoning; you were at rſt for demonſtrating that there is no ſove-eign Intelligence; when I ſhewed you that

† *See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

your pretended demonſtrations were only looſe ſuppoſitions, you then took refuge in a general doubting; and now at laſt your philoſophy terminates in deſtroying reaſon, rejecting all evidence, and maintaining that there is no rule whereby to make any ſettled judgments: it is to no purpoſe therefore to reaſon longer with you.

Here I left off ſpeaking that I might liſten to what he would anſwer, but finding that he did not open his mouth, I imagined that he began to be moved, and I continued thus: I ſuppoſe that you doubt ſeriouſly, but is it want of light, or the fear of being convinced, which cauſes your doubts? Enter into yourſelf; truth is better felt than underſtood: hearken to the voice of nature that ſpeaks within you, ſhe will ſoon riſe up againſt all your refined ſophiſtry; your heart which is born with an inſatiable thirſt of happineſs will give your underſtanding the lie, when it rejoices in the unnatural hope of its approaching extinction; once again, I ſay, enter into yourſelf, impoſe ſilence upon your imagination, let not your paſſions blind you, and you will find in the inmoſt of your ſoul an inexpreſſible feeling of the Divinity which will diſpel your doubts: it is by hearkening to this internal evidence that your underſtanding and your heart will be reconciled; on their reconcilement depends the peace of the ſoul, and it is in this tranquillity alone that we

an hear the voice of wiſdom, which ſupplies he defects of our reaſonings. O my father, my ear father, where are you? I ſeek you in yourſelf without finding you: what is become of hat divine man who formerly carried me hrough all the regions of immenſity, who aught me to run back through all times to eternity itſelf? What then is become of that ſublime, ſubtile and extenſive underſtanding? What cloud of paſſions has obſcured it? What midnight of prejudice is caſt over it? Here I fixed my eyes upon him to ſee whether my arguments or ſentiments had made any impreſſion on his mind, but he looked upon me with the diſdainful ſmile of a haughty ſoul that hides her weakneſs and deſpair under an air of contempt. I then held my peace and invoked the heavenly Minerva in a profound ſilence; I prayed to her to enlighten him, but ſhe was deaf to me becauſe he was deaf to her; he ſaw not the truth becauſe he loved it not.

Here Pythagoras ceaſed and Cyrus ſaid to him: You join the moſt affecting conſiderations with the moſt ſolid arguments; whether we conſult the idea of the firſt cauſe or the nature of its effects, the happineſs of man or the good of ſociety, reaſon or experience, all conſpire to prove your ſyſtem; but to believe that of Anaximander we muſt take for granted what can never with the leaſt reaſon be imagined, that motion is an eſſential property of mat-

ter, that matter is the only exiſting ſubſtance, and that the infinite force acts without knowledge or deſign, notwithſtanding all the marks of wiſdom that ſhine throughout the univerſe. I do not conceive how men can heſitate between the two ſyſtems; the one is obſcure to the underſtanding, denies all conſolation to the heart, and is deſtructive of ſociety; the other is full of light and of comfortable ideas, produces noble ſentiments, and confirms us in all the duties of civil life. One of the two ſyſtems muſt be true; the eternal Being is either blind nature, or a wiſe intelligence; there is no medium; you have ſhewn that the firſt opinion is falſe and abſurd, the other therefore is evidently true and ſolid. Your arguments have darted a pure light into the inmoſt of my ſoul: you ſeem nevertheleſs to have left your adverſary's objection concerning the origin of evil in its full ſtrength: help me to anſwer this grand difficulty. Here Pythagoras ran through all the different opinions of the philoſophers without being able to ſatisfy Cyrus; the prince found a ſolution of this difficulty no where but among the Hebrews; but though he was not content with the anſwers of the Samian on this head, he would not make him feel the weakneſs of them, nor let him perceive that he himſelf was ſenſible of it; he dexterouſly ſhifted the queſtion, and returning to his diſpute, make haſte to tell me, ſaid he, O wiſe Pythago-

ras! what impreſſion your diſcourſe made upon Anaximander.

He withdrew, anſwered the Philoſopher, in confuſion and deſpair, and with a reſolution to ruin me. As weak eyes, which the ſun dazzles and blinds, ſuch was the heart of Anaximander; neither prodigies, nor proofs, nor touching conſiderations can move the ſoul, when error has ſeized upon the underſtanding by the corruption of the heart. Since my departure from Samos, I hear that he is fallen into the wild extravagances which I had foreſeen: being reſolved to believe nothing which could not be demonſtrated with geometrical evidence, he is come not only to doubt of the moſt certain truths, but to believe the greateſt abſurdities. He maintains, without any allegory, that all he ſees is but a dream; that all the men who are about him are phantoms; that it is he himſelf who ſpeaks to and anſwers himſelf, when he converſes with them; that the heaven and the earth, the ſtars and the elements, plants and trees, are only illuſions; and in a word, that there is nothing real but himſelf: at firſt he was for deſtroying the divine Eſſence to ſubſtitute a blind nature in its place; at preſent he has deſtroyed that nature itſelf, and maintains that he is the only exiſtent being*. Thus ended the converſation be-

* *The language of the modern Egotiſts and of*

tween Cyrus and Pythagoras. The prince was touched with the conſideration of the weakneſs of human underſtanding; he ſaw by the example of Anaximander, that the moſt ſubtile genius's may go gradually from impiety to extravagance, and fall into a philoſophical delirium, which is as real a madneſs as any other. Cyrus went the next day to ſee the ſage, in order to put ſome queſtions to him about the laws of Minos.

The profound peace, ſaid he to Pythagoras, which is at preſent in Perſia, gives me leiſure to travel; I am going over the moſt famous countries to collect uſeful knowledge; I have been in Egypt where I have informed myſelf in the laws and government of that kingdom; I have travelled over Greece to acquaint myſelf with the different republicks which compoſe it, eſpecially thoſe of Lacedaemon and Athens. The ancient laws of Egypt ſeem to me to have been excellent and founded in nature, but its form of government was defective; the kings had no bridle to reſtrain them; the thirty judges did not ſhare the ſupreme authority with them; they were but the interpreters of the laws. Deſpotic power and conqueſt at laſt deſtroyed that empire; I fear that Athens will be ruined by a contrary

Carneades heretofore. See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.

fault; its government is too popular and tumultuous: the laws of Solon are good, but he had not ſufficient authority to reform the genius of a people that have an unbounded inclination for liberty, luxury and pleaſure. Lycurgus has provided a remedy for the defects which ruined Egypt and will deſtroy Athens; but his laws are too contrary to nature: equality of ranks and community of goods cannot ſubſiſt long; as ſoon as the Lacedaemonians ſhall have extended their dominion in Greece, they will doubtleſs throw off the yoke of theſe laws; they reſtrain the paſſions on one ſide but indulge them too much on another, and while they proſcribe ſenſuality they favour ambition. None of theſe three forms of government ſeem to me to be perfect; I have been told that Minos heretofore eſtabliſhed one in this iſland, which was free from the defects I have mentioned.

Pythagoras admired the young Prince's penetration, and conducted him to the temple where the laws of Minos were kept in a gold box; they contained all that regarded religion, morality and policy, and whatever might contribute to the knowledge of the gods, ourſelves and other men: Cyrus found in this ſacred book all that was excellent in the laws of Egypt, Sparta and Athens, and thereby perceived, that as Minos had borrowed from the Egyptians, ſo Lycurgus and Solon were in-

debted to the Cretan law-giver for the moſt valuable parts of their inſtitutions; and it was upon this model alſo that Cyrus formed thoſe admirable laws which he eſtabliſhed in his empire after he had conquered Aſia.

Pythagoras after this explained to him the form of government of ancient Crete, and how it provided equally againſt deſpotic power and anarchy. One would think, added the philoſopher, that a government ſo perfect in all its parts ſhould have ſubſiſted for ever, but there hardly remain any traces of it. The ſucceſſors of Minos degenerated by degrees; they did not think themſelves great enough while they were only guardians of the laws; they would ſubſtitute their arbitrary will in place of them. The Cretans oppoſed the innovation; from thence ſprang diſcords and civil wars; in theſe tumults the kings were dethroned, exiled, or put to death, and uſurpers took their place; theſe uſurpers to flatter the people weakened the authority of the nobles; the Comes or deputies of the people invaded the ſovereign authority; the monarchy at firſt ſhaken and then deſpiſed was at laſt aboliſhed, and the government became popular. Such is the ſad condition of human things. The deſire of unbounded authority in princes, and the love of independence in the people, expoſe all kingdoms to inevitable revolutions; nothing is fixed or ſtable among men. Cyrus per-

ceived by this, that the ſafety and happineſs of a kingdom do not depend ſo much upon the wiſdom of laws, as upon that of kings. All ſorts of government are good when thoſe who govern ſeek only the public welfare, but they are all defective, becauſe the governors being but men, are imperfect.

After ſeveral ſuch converſations with the wiſe Samian, the Prince prepared to continue his travels, and at parting ſaid to him, I am extremely concerned to ſee you abandoned to the cruelty of capricious fortune! How happy ſhould I be to ſpend my life with you in Perſia? I will not offer you pleaſures or riches which allure other men; I know you would be little moved by them; you are above the favours of kings, becauſe you ſee the vanity of human grandeur, but I offer you in my dominions peace, liberty, and the ſweet leiſure which the gods grant to thoſe who love wiſdom. I ſhould have a ſincere joy, replied Pythagoras, to live under your protection with Zoroaſter and the Magi, but I muſt follow the orders given me by the oracle of Apollo; a mighty empire is riſing in Italy, which will one day become maſter of the world; its form of government is like that eſtabliſhed in Crete by Minos; the genius of the people is as warlike as that of the Spartans; the generous love of their country, the eſteem of perſonal poverty in order to augment the public treaſure, the

noble and diſintereſted ſentiments which prevail among the citizens, their contempt of pleaſure, and their ardent zeal for liberty, render them fit to conquer the whole world; I am to introduce there the knowledge of the gods and of laws. I muſt leave you, but I will never forget you; my heart will follow you every where: you would doubtleſs extend your conqueſts as the oracles have foretold: may the gods preſerve you then from being intoxicated by ſovereign authority! may you long feel the pleaſure of reigning only to make other men happy! Fame will inform me of your ſucceſſes: I ſhall often aſk, has not grandeur made a change in the heart of Cyrus? Does he ſtill love virtue? Does he continue to fear the gods? Though we now part we ſhall meet again in the abode of the juſt; I ſhall doubtleſs deſcend thither before you; I will there expect your manes. Ah Cyrus! how joyful ſhall I be to ſee you again after death among the good kings, who are crowned by the gods with an immortal glory! Farewel, Prince, farewel, and remember that you never employ your power but to execute the dictates of your goodneſs.

Cyrus was ſo much affected, that he could not anſwer; he reſpectfully embraced the old man, and bedewed his face with tears; but in ſhort they muſt ſeparate: Pythagoras embarked very ſoon for Italy, and the prince in a

Phoenician veſſel for Tyre. As Cyrus was ſailing from Crete, and the coaſts of Greece began to diſappear, he felt an inward regret, and calling to mind all he had ſeen, ſaid to Araſpes: What! is this the nation that was repreſented to me as ſo ſuperficial and trifling? I have found there great men of all kinds, profound philoſophers, able captains, wiſe politicians, and genius's capable of reaching to all heights, and of going to the bottom of things. Other nations methinks don't do the Greeks juſtice.

I cannot admire, anſwered Araſpes, either their talents or their ſciences; the Chaldeans and Egyptians ſurpaſs them exceedingly in all ſolid knowledge. Lycurgus, Solon, Thales and Pythagoras would never have known any thing if they had not travelled in Egypt and the Eaſt: all that they have added to our philoſophy has been only ſo much allay to it. The doctrine of * Thales is a ſeries of looſe ſuppoſitions; his ethereal fluid is a mere whim and not at all geometrical; what compariſon between his philoſophy and that of † Moſchus

* *He introduced Mathematics and Phyſics into Greece, as Deſcartes revived the taſte of them in Europe.*

† *He was the firſt that taught the atomical doctrine, not in the ſenſe of Democritus and Epicurus, but in that of Sir Iſaac Newton. See Opt.*

the Phoenician? Beſides I don't find any thing of the original, creating, maſculine genius in the Greek poets and orators, but a diffuſed ſtyle, ſuperfluous flowers, ideas that ſeem clear and tranſparent only becauſe they are light and thin; their pretty thoughts, ingenious turns and pretended delicacies proceed wholly from the infant weakneſs of their underſtanding, which cannot riſe to the ſublime, and continually hovers about the ſurface of objects: in a word, all that I admire in the Greeks is their politeneſs, their converſable qualities, their taſte for pleaſure and their continual joy; they purchaſe happineſs at a cheaper rate than other nations.

It is true, replied Cyrus, we find ſublime ideas and uſeful diſcoveries among the Chaldeans and Egyptians, but their depth of ſcience is often full of obſcurity; they know not like the Greeks how to come at hidden truths by a chain of known and eaſy ones; that ingenious method of ranging each idea in its proper place, of leading the mind by degrees from the moſt ſimple truths to the moſt

pag. 407. *Moſchus and the Phoenicians believed, that after the chaos the plaſtic ſpirit of the univerſe had brought the atoms together by love,* ἤρσθη τὸ πνεῦμα τῶν ἰδίων ἀρχῶν, *this is the manner in which the ancients expreſſed the doctrine of attraction.*

compounded, with order, perſpicuity and accuracy, is a ſecret with which the Chaldeans and Egyptians, who boaſt of having more of original genius, are little acquainted. This nevertheleſs is the true ſcience by which man is taught the extent and bounds of his own mind, and this is what we owe to Thales; his works and his travels ſpread this taſte in the Eaſt; what ingratitude and injuſtice to make no other uſe of his great diſcoveries than to deſpiſe him becauſe he did not diſcover all! It is true his philoſophy is not exact; but Moſchus, the great Moſchus, has not he himſelf had recourſe to an ethereal fluid in order to explain his principle of attraction, which, as at firſt repreſented by his diſciples, was wholly unintelligible, a mere occult quality. I know that the Greeks love the agreeable kinds of knowledge more than abſtract ideas; the arts of imitation more than nice ſpeculations; but they do not deſpiſe the ſublime ſciences: on the contrary, they excel in them when they apply their minds to the ſtudy of them. Have we in all the Eaſt ſuch a † hiſtory of Phyſics as that written by Anaximenes? Do not you find beauties in Homer, the fables of Aeſop, Archilochus's ſatires, and in the dramatic pieces which are acted at Athens to render vice odious and ridicu-

† *A kind of hiſtory like that of the academy of ſciences in France.*

lous? I repeat what I ſaid to Solon, the Greeks have a finer taſte than other nations. It is for want of ſenſibility that we do not ſufficiently admire the delicate thoughts, the tender paſſions, the natural and unaffected graces in their writings. The poem of Abaris the Scythian concerning the † ruin of the garden of Heſperides would have been more perfect if the author had been a Greek. We ſee there all the efforts of a genius that can riſe to the higheſt heaven, deſcend to the loweſt abyſs, and fly with a rapid wing from one end of immenſity to the other; yet Abaris, the admirable Abaris, does he always diſtinguiſh between the natural and the low, ſublimity and bombaſt, enthuſiaſm and fury, delicacy and ſubtility? I grant that the Greeks ſeem to be ſometimes taken up too much with trifles and amuſements; but the great men among them have the ſecret of preparing the moſt important affairs, even while they are diverting themſelves: they are ſenſible that the mind has need now and then of reſt; but in theſe relaxations they can put in motion the greateſt machines by the ſmalleſt ſprings; they look upon life as a kind of ſport, but ſuch as reſembles the Olympic games, where mirthful dancing is mixed with laborious exerciſes. They love ſtrangers more than

† *It might be ſomewhat like Milton's Paradiſe Loſt.*

other nations, and their country deſerves to be ſtyled the common country of mankind. It is for theſe qualities that I prefer the Greeks to other nations, and not becauſe of their politeneſs.

True politeneſs is common to delicate ſouls of all nations, and is not peculiar to any one people. External civility is but the form eſtabliſhed in the different countries for expreſſing that politeneſs of the ſoul. I prefer the civility of the Greeks to that of other nations, becauſe it is more ſimple and leſs troubleſom; it excludes all ſuperfluous formality; its only aim is to render company and converſation eaſy and agreeable: but internal politeneſs is very different from that ſuperficial civility. You were not preſent that day when Pythagoras ſpoke to me upon this head; I will tell you his notion of politeneſs, to which his own practice is anſwerable. It is an evenneſs of ſoul which excludes at the ſame time both inſenſibility and too much earneſtneſs; it ſuppoſes a quickneſs in diſcerning what may ſuit the different characters of men; it is a ſweet condeſcenſion by which we adapt ourſelves to each man's taſte, not to flatter his paſſions, but to avoid provoking them. In a word, it is a forgetting of ourſelves in order to ſeek what may be agreeable to others, but in ſo delicate a manner as to let them ſcarce perceive that we are ſo employed: it knows how to contradict with

respect, and to please without adulation, and is equally remote from an insipid complaisance and a low familiarity. Cyrus and Araspes were discoursing together in this manner when they discovered the coasts of Phoenicia, and they soon after arrived at Tyre.

THE TRAVELS OF CYRUS.

SEVENTH BOOK.

THE king of Babylon having deſtroyed ancient Tyre, the inhabitants had built a new city in a neighbouring iſland, thirteen furlongs from the ſhore. This iſland ſtretched itſelf in form of a creſcent, and encloſed a bay where the ſhips lay in ſhelter from the winds; divers rows of cedars beautified the port; and at each end of it was a fortreſs for the ſecurity of the town and of the ſhipping. In the middle of the mole was a portico of twelve rows of pillars, where, at certain hours of the day, the people of all nations aſſembled to buy and ſell; there one might hear all languages ſpoken, and ſee the manners and habits of all the different nations; ſo that Tyre ſeemed the capital of the univerſe. A prodigious number of veſſels were floating upon the water, ſome going, others arriving; here the mariners were furling their ſails while the weary rowers enjoyed re-

poſe; there one might ſee new built veſſels launched; a vaſt multitude of people covered the port; ſome were buſy in unloading ſhips, others in tranſporting merchandiſe, and others in filling the magazines; all were in motion, earneſt at work, and eager in promoting trade.

Cyrus obſerved a good while with pleaſure this ſcene of hurry and buſineſs, and then advancing towards one end of the mole met a man whom he thought he knew: Am I deceived, cried out the prince, or is it Amenophis who has left his ſolitude to come into the ſociety of men? It is I, replied the Egyptian ſage; I have changed my retreat in Arabia for another at the foot of mount Libanus. Cyrus ſurprized at this alteration aſked him the reaſon: Arobal, ſaid Amenophis, is the cauſe of it; that Arobal of whom I ſpoke to you formerly, who was priſoner with me at Memphis and my fellow-ſlave in the mines of Egypt, was ſon to the king of Tyre, but knew not his birth; he has aſcended the throne of his anceſtors and his true name is Ecnibal; I enjoy a perfect tranquillity in his dominion; come and ſee a prince who is worthy of your friendſhip. I have always had a concern for him, replied Cyrus, on account of your friendſhip for him, but I could never forgive his leaving you: I rejoice with you on your finding him again, I long impatiently to ſee him, and to teſtify to him the ſatisfaction I feel.

Amenophis conducted the prince to the royal palace and presented him to the king: noble souls make acquaintance at first sight, nor does it require time to form strict friendships, where a sympathy of thoughts and sentiments have prepared the way for them. The king of Tyre asked Cyrus divers questions about his country, his travels, and the manners of the different nations he had seen: he was charmed with the noble sentiments and delicate taste which discovered themselves in the young prince's discourse, who on the other hand admired the good sense and virtue of Ecnibal; he spent some days at his court, and at length desired Amenophis to relate to him the misfortunes of the king of Tyre, and by what means he had ascended the throne.

The Egyptian sage retired one day with Cyrus and Araspes into the hollow of a rock beautified with shell-work; from thence they had a view of the sea, the city of Tyre, and the fertile country about it; on one side mount Libanus bounded the prospect, and on the other the isle of Cyprus seemed to fly away upon the waves; they all three sat down upon a bed of moss on the brink of a fountain whose still waters seemed to sleep in their very source. When they had reposed themselves a while the Egyptian sage began thus:

While Ecnibal was yet a child in his cradle his father died; his uncle Itobal aspiring to the

throne reſolved to rid himſelf of the young prince; but Bahal, to whom his education was committed, ſpread a report of his death to preſerve him from the cruelty of the tyrant, and ſent him to a ſolitary part of the country at the foot of Mount Libanus, where he made him paſs for his own ſon under the name of Arobal, without diſcovering his birth even to the prince himſelf. When Ecnibal was in his fourteenth year, Bahal formed the deſign of placing him upon the throne: the uſurper being apprized of it, clapt up the loyal Tyrian in priſon and threatened him with the moſt cruel death, if he did not deliver up the young prince into his hands. Bahal would make no diſcovery, being reſolved to die rather than fail in his duty and affection for Ecnibal. In the mean while the tyrant, knowing the heir of the crown to be yet living, was greatly diſturbed and incenſed. To ſatiate his rage and calm his diſquiets he ordered all Bahal's children to be put to death: but a faithful ſlave, having notice of it, contrived to ſave Ecnibal; ſo that he left Phoenicia without knowing the ſecret of his birth. Bahal eſcaped out of priſon by throwing himſelf from a high tower into the ſea; he gained the ſhore by ſwimming and retired to Babylon where he made himſelf known to Nabuchodonoſor. To revenge himſelf for the murder of his children, he ſtirred up that conqueror to make war upon Itobal, and to

undertake the long ſiege of Tyre. The king of Babylon, being informed of the bravery and capacity of Bahal, choſe him to command in chief in this expedition. Itobal was killed, and after the taking of the town Bahal was raiſed to the throne of Tyre by Nabuchodonoſor, who in that manner recompenſed his ſervices and fidelity. Bahal did not ſuffer himſelf to be dazzled by the luſtre of royalty: having learned that Eenibal had eſcaped the rage of the tyrant, his firſt care was to ſend over all Aſia to ſeek him, but he could learn no news of him; for we were then in the mines of Egypt.

Arobal having wandered a long time in Africa and loſt the ſlave, his conductor, engaged himſelf in Apries's troops, being reſolved either to end his days or to diſtinguiſh himſelf by ſome glorious action. I have formerly given you an account of our firſt acquaintance, our mutual friendſhip, our common ſlavery, and our ſeparation. Upon his leaving me he went to Babylon, where he was informed of the revolution which had happened at Tyre, and that Bahal, whom he believed his father, was raiſed to the throne; he left the court of Nabuchodonoſor without delay, and ſoon arrived in Phœnicia where he was introduced to Bahal. The good old man loaded with years was repoſing himſelf upon a rich carpet; joy gave him ſtrength; he got up, ran to Arobal, exa-

mined him, recalled all his features, and in a word knew him to be the ſame; he could no longer contain himſelf, he fell upon his neck, embraced him, bedewed his face with tears, and cried out with tranſport; It is then you whom I ſee, it is Ecnibal himſelf, the ſon of my maſter, the child whom I ſaved from the tyrant's hands, the innocent cauſe of my diſgrace and the ſubject of my glory; I can then ſhew my gratitude towards the king who is no more, by reſtoring his ſon. Ah gods! is it thus that you recompence my fidelity, I die content. He immediately diſpatched ambaſſadors to the court of Babylon to aſk permiſſion of the king to reſign the crown and recognize Ecnibal for his lawful maſter. It was thus that the prince of Tyre aſcended the throne of his anceſtors, and Baal died ſoon after.

As ſoon as Arobal was reſtored he ſent a Tyrian to me in my ſolitude to inform me of his fortune, and to preſs me to come and live at his court: I was charmed to hear of his happineſs and to find that he ſtill loved me; I expreſſed my joy in the warmeſt manner, and ſignified to the Tyrian that all my deſires were ſatisfied ſince my friend was happy; but I abſolutely refuſed to leave my retirement: he ſent to me again to conjure me to come and aſſiſt him in the labours of royalty; I anſwered, that he was ſufficiently knowing to fulfil all his obligations, and that his paſt misfortunes would

enable him to ſhun the dangers to which ſupreme authority is expoſed. At laſt, ſeeing that nothing could move me, he left Tyre under pretence of going to Babylon to do homage to the Aſſyrian king, and arrived very ſoon at my ſolitude. We tenderly embraced each other a long while; doubtleſs you thought, ſaid he to me, that I had forgotten you, that our ſeparation proceeded from the cooling of my friendſhip, and that ambition had ſeduced my heart; but you were deceived: it is true that when I left you I could no longer ſupport retirement, I had no peace in it; this reſtleſſneſs no doubt proceeded from the gods themſelves; they drew me away to accompliſh the deſigns of their wiſdom; I could enjoy no repoſe while I reſiſted them: it was thus that they conducted me to the throne by unknown paths; grandeur has not changed my heart; ſhew me that abſence has not diminiſhed your friendſhip; come and ſupport me in the midſt of the toils and dangers in which an elevated ſtate engages me. Ah! ſaid I to him, do not force me to quit my ſolitude; ſuffer me to enjoy the repoſe which the gods have granted me; grandeur excites the paſſions; courts are ſtormy ſeas, I have been already ſhipwrecked and have happily eſcaped; expoſe me not to the like misfortune a ſecond time. I perceive your thoughts, replied Eenibal, you are afraid of the friendſhip of kings, you have experienced their in-

conſtancy, you have found that their favour is frequently but the forerunner of their hatred; Apries loved you once and deſerted you afterwards; but alas! ſhould you compare me with Apries? No, no, replied I, I ſhall always diſtruſt the friendſhip of a prince brought up in luxury and effeminacy like the king of Egypt; but for you, who were educated far from a throne and in ignorance of your rank, and have ſince been tried by ſuch a variety of adverſe fortune, I have no fear that the regal dignity ſhould alter your ſentiments: the gods have conducted you to the throne, you muſt fulfil the duties incumbent upon a king, and ſacrifice yourſelf to the public good; but for me, nothing obliges me to engage anew in tumult and trouble; I have no thought but to die in ſolitude, where wiſdom nouriſhes my heart, and where the hope of being ſoon re-united to the great Oſiris makes me forget all my paſt misfortunes.

Here a torrent of tears obliged us to ſilence, which Ecnibal at length breaking ſaid to me: Has then the ſtudy of wiſdom ſerved only to make Amenophis inſenſible? well, if you will grant nothing to friendſhip, come at leaſt to defend me from the frailties of human nature; I ſhall one day perhaps forget that I have been unfortunate, I may come to be unmoved with the miſeries of men, ſupreme authority will perhaps poiſon my heart, and render me like

other princes; come and preſerve me from the errors to which my ſtate is ever liable; come and confirm me in all thoſe maxims of virtue with which you formerly inſpired me; I feel that I have more need of a friend than ever. Ecnibal melted me with theſe words, and I conſented to follow him, but upon condition that I ſhould not live at court, that I ſhould never have any employment there, and that I ſhould retire into ſome ſolitary place near Tyre; I have only changed one retreat for another, that I might have the pleaſure of being nearer my friend. We left Arabia Felix, went to Babylon, and ſaw there Nabuchodonoſor; but alas! how different is he now from what he was heretofore! he is no longer that conqueror who reigned in the midſt of triumphs, and aſtoniſhed the nations with the ſplendor of his glory; for ſome time paſt he has loſt his reaſon; he flies the ſociety of men, and wanders about in the mountains and woods like a wild beaſt; how terrible a fate for ſo great a prince! When we arrived at Tyre I choſe my retreat at the foot of Mount Libanus, in the ſame place where Ecnibal was brought up; I come here ſometimes to ſee him, and he goes frequently to my ſolitude; nothing can impair our friendſhip, becauſe truth is the only bond of it. I ſee by this example that royalty is not as I imagined, incompatible with tender ſentiments; all depends on the

first education of princes; adversity is the best school for them; it is there that heroes are formed; Apries had been spoiled by prosperity in his youth; Arobal is confirmed in virtue by misfortunes.

Cyrus's esteem for Ecnibal was much heightened by this relation; he admired that prince's constancy in friendship more than all his other great qualities. During his stay at Tyre he was entertained in a very magnificent manner, and often expressed to the king his astonishment at the splendor which reigned in that city. Be not surprized at it, answered the Tyrian prince, wherever commerce flourishes under the protection of wise laws, plenty becomes quickly universal, and magnificence costs the state nothing. Cyrus, upon this, desired the king of Tyre to explain to him how he had brought his dominions into such a flourishing condition in so short a time.

The wisest of the Hebrew kings, said Ecnibal, shewed many ages ago to what a pitch of splendor and magnificence commerce will raise a little state; his ships sailed even to the remotest islands to import from thence the wealth, perfumes, and rich commodities of the East; after the ruin and captivity of the Hebrews we seized upon all the branches of their commerce. Tyre is happily situated; her inhabitants understand navigation; trade was at first perfectly free there; strangers were trea-

ted as citizens of Tyre: but under the reign of Itobal all fell to ruin; instead of keeping our ports open according to the old custom, he shut them up out of political views, formed a design of changing the fundamental constitution of Phoenicia, and of rendring a nation warlike, that had always shunned having any part in the quarrels of her neighbours. By this means commerce languished, and our strength diminished; Itobal drew upon us the wrath of the king of Babylon, who razed our ancient city and made us tributary. As soon as Bahal was placed upon the throne, he endeavoured to remedy these mischiefs; I have but followed the plan which that good prince left me.

He began by opening his ports to strangers, and by restoring the freedom of commerce. He declared that his name should never be made use of in it, but to support its rights and make its laws be observed. The authority of princes is too formidable for other men to enter into partnership with them. Commerce was carried on in the first republics only by exchange of merchandise; but this method was found troublesom, and subject to many inconveniencies; the value of provisions is not always the same, they cannot be transported without expence, nor distributed without trouble, nor long kept without spoiling. It was necessary to have such a common mea-

ſure of the value of merchandiſe, as ſhould be incorruptible, portable and diviſible into ſmall parts for the convenience of the pooreſt citizens. Metals ſeemed proper for this uſe, and it is this common meaſure which is called money. The public treaſure having been exhauſted by long wars, there was not money enough in Phoenicia to ſet the people to work; arts languiſhed, and agriculture itſelf was neglected. Bahal engaged the principal merchants to advance conſiderable ſums to the artizans, while the former trafficked together upon ſafe credit; but this credit never took place among the labourers and mechanics. Coin is not only a common meaſure for regulating the price of the ſeveral kinds of merchandiſe, but it is a ſure pledge, which has an intrinſic value, and pretty near the ſame in all nations. Bahal would not have this pledge ever taken out of the hands of the people, becauſe they have need of it to ſecure themſelves againſt the corruption of miniſters, the oppreſſion of the rich, and even the ill uſe which kings might make of their authority. In order to encourage the Tyrians to work, he not only left every one in the free poſſeſſion of his gain, but alloted great rewards for thoſe who ſhould excel by their genius, or diſtinguiſh themſelves by any new invention. He built great work-houſes for manufactures; he lodged there all thoſe who were eminent in their reſpective arts; and

that their attention might not be taken off by uneasy cares, he supplied all their wants, and he flattered their ambition by granting them such honours and distinctions in his capital as were suitable to their condition. He took off the exorbitant imposts, and forbad all monopolies; so that neither buyers nor sellers are under any constraint or oppression. Trade being left free, my subjects import hither in abundance all the best things which the universe affords, and they sell them at reasonable rates. All sorts of provisions pay me a very small tribute at entring; the less I fetter trade the more my treasures increase; the diminution of imposts diminishes the price of merchandise; the less dear things are, the more are consumed of them, and by this consumption my revenues exceed greatly what they would amount to by laying excessive duties. Kings, who think to enrich themselves by their exactions, are not only enemies to their people, but ignorant of their own interests.

I perceive, said Cyrus, that commerce is a source of great advantages in a state; I believe that is the only secret to create plenty in great monarchies, and to repair the desolations caused there by war; numerous troops quickly exhaust a kingdom if we cannot draw subsistence for them from foreign countries by a flourishing trade. Have a care, said Amenophis,

that you do not mistake. Commerce ought not to be neglected in great monarchies, but it must be regulated by other rules than in petty republics. Phœnicia carries on commerce, not only to supply her own wants, but those of foreign states. As her territories are small, her strength consists in making herself useful and even necessary to all her neighbours; her merchants bring from the remotest islands the riches of nature, and distribute them afterwards among other nations. It is not her own superfluities, but those of other countries, which are the foundation of her trade. In a city like Tyre, where commerce is the only support of the state, all the principal citizens are traders; the merchants are the princes of the republic: but in great empires, where military virtue and subordination of ranks are absolutely necessary, commerce ought to be encouraged without being universal. To this end, it is necessary to establish companies, grant them privileges, and intrust them with the general commerce of the nation: they should make settlements in remote islands, and maintain a naval force for their defence against pyrates: those who cannot employ themselves in trade shall lodge their money in these public companies: the magistrates, priests, and military men cannot traffic without neglecting their proper employments, and demeaning themselves; those trading compa-

nies shall be the depositaries of every private man's money, which thus united will produce an hundredfold. In a kingdom that is fruitful, spacious, populous and abounding with seaports, if the people are laborious they may draw from the bosom of the earth immense treasures, which would be lost by the negligence and sloth of its inhabitants. By improving the productions of nature by manufactures the national riches are augmented; and it is by carrying these fruits of industry to other nations that a solid commerce is established in a great empire: but nothing should be exported to other countries but its superfluities, nor any thing imported from them but what is purchased with those superfluities. By this means the state will never contract any debts abroad, the balance of trade will be always on its side, and it will draw from other nations wherewith to defray the expences of war; great advantages will be reaped from commerce without destroying the distinction of ranks, or weakening military virtue: one of the chief accomplishments of a prince is to know the genius of his people, the productions of nature in his kingdom, and how to make the best advantage of them. Cyrus by his conversation with Ecnibal and Amenophis learnt many useful notions and maxims in government which he had not met with in other countries; they were of great service to him

after the taking of Sardis, when he ordered gold money to be coined, and turned the king of Lydia's treaſures into ſpecie †.

The next day Cyrus accompanied the king of Tyre ſome furlongs from his capital to aſſiſt at the annual rites inſtituted in commemoration of the death of Adonis. Between Heliopolis and Byblos there was a ſtately temple conſecrated to Venus: on one ſide of the portal was placed a ſtatue of the goddeſs, ſhe leaned her declining head on her left hand, grief appeared in her countenance, and tears ſeemed to flow from her eyes, which were turned upon the ſtatue of her lover placed on the other ſide; a ſtream of blood ſeemed to ſpring from his heart, and to dye the river Thammuz, whoſe purple waters rolled with impetuoſity towards the ſea. The friezes and the architraves were adorned with ſculptures in bas-relief, repreſenting the three metamorphoſes of the goddeſs, the hiſtory of her unfaithfulneſs, and of all the effects of Adonis's conſtancy.

The temple was built of fine Parian marble; its immenſe vault repreſented that of heaven; in the middle of it appeared the chariot of the ſun encircled by the planets, and at a greater diſtance the empyreum ſpangled with ſtars. Upon the altar ſtood a ſtatue of the goddeſs; ſhe held in her hand the globe of the world,

† *See Sir Iſaac Newton's Chronol. p. 319.*

and upon her wonderful girdle were deſcribed the twelve conſtellations. The artiſt had animated the marble in ſuch a manner, that the ſtatue expreſſed three different paſſions, according to the different points of view from whence it was beheld *; at a diſtance it was a noble and majeſtic beauty that ſeemed to invite with a ſoft ſmile, accompanied with a tender and modeſt look; upon a nearer view her face, turned towards the Eaſt, proclaimed the peaceful joy of a ſoul that ſees the beauty of truth, poſſeſſes it, and is poſſeſſed by it; when viewed from the other ſide ſhe ſeemed to turn away her eyes, and deſpiſe thoſe who durſt approach her with a profane heart and impure thoughts. In the ſculptures of the altar, Love † under the ſhape of Adonis ſeemed to deſcend from heaven, his infant look ſpoke nothing but candour, innocence and ſimplicity; the virtues walked before him, the muſes followed him, and the graces hovered about him; he had no bandage upon his eyes, and held in his

* *The Venus of Medicis is ſaid in like manner to have three different aſpects, according to the different points of view from which it is beheld.*

† *Since there are two Venus's, ſays Plato, there muſt be two Loves, and he calls this Love the great god,* Μέγας θεὸς εἶν ὁ Ἔρως ϗ θαυμαστὸς ἐν θεοῖς. *Conviv. p.* 178, 180.

hand a lighted torch, to shew that he enlightens at the same time that he inflames.

When Cyrus entered the temple he found all the people, clad in mourning, in a cavern, where the image of a young man was lying upon a bed of flowers and odoriferous herbs; nine days were spent in fasting, prayer and lamentations, after which the public sorrow was changed into gladness; songs of joy succeeded to weeping †, and the whole assembly began this sacred hymn. 'Adonis is returned to 'life, Urania weeps no more, he is re-ascended 'to heaven, he will soon come down again up- 'on earth to banish thence both crimes and 'miseries for ever.'

Cyrus was struck with the august solemnity of the Tyrian rites; he knew nothing of the history of Venus and Adonis but by the Mythology of the Greeks, and suspected that they had debased it according to their custom: he desired Amenophis to explain to him the true meaning of the Phoenician ceremonies. The wise Egyptian sat down with the young prince over-against the great gate of the temple, in a place from whence they could see the statues of the god and goddess, with all the bas-reliefs

† *All these Tyrian rites are to be found in Lucian, St. Jerome, St. Cyril, Julius Firmicus, Macrobius and Procopius. See the Discourse on the Mythology of the Pagans.*

that represented their adventures, and then said: it is not long since the Greeks were utter strangers to letters, the muses and the sciences; their understanding is still young, they have no true knowledge of antiquity; they have disfigured all the mysteries of the ancient religion by their absurd fictions and gross images: the combats of Mythras, the murder of Osiris, the death of Adonis, the banishment of Apollo, and the labours of Hercules, represent to us the same truths; but different nations have painted them under different similitudes; what we learn of them from the Tyrian annals is as follows.

Before the formation of the elements, the heavens and the earth, an eternal silence reigned throughout all the ethereal regions, and the music of the stars had not yet begun: the great god * Belus dwelt in an inaccessible light with the goddess † Urania, who incessantly sprang from his head, and with the god ‡ A-

* *Belus or Baali was anciently one of the names of the true God among the Hebrews. See Hosea, chap.* ii. *ver.* 16. *and Selden de Diis Syris, cap.* i. *Syntag.* 2.

† *Urania, Minerva and Isis are the same. See Seld. ibid. cap.* 4.

‡ "Αδωνις δεσπότης *apud Phoenices unde Laconibus* Κύρις, *id est* Κύριος, *Seld. ib. c.* 11. *Adonis comes from the word Adonai, one of the*

donis whom he had engendred like unto himself. Belus being more and more charmed with the beauty of his son, desired that there might be several miniatures and living images of him. Adonis, animated by the power of Belus, moulded some rays of light, and made suns, stars, and numberless worlds invisible to us; but as yet there were no inhabitants for them. He looked upon his mother, and on a sudden he saw spring out from the vast abyss a beautiful flower which contained the soul of the world; Adonis breathed upon it; what cannot the almighty breath of a god? The flower swelled, expanded itself and was changed into a young goddess whom he named * Urania after his mother. Transported with love and pleasure, he would have presented her to his father, but she was not yet able to support the splendor of

ten names of God. Vid. D. Hier. Ep. ad Marcell. This Adonis is the same with the Logos of Plato, whom he defines Ἔκγονον ὃ παλαιὸν ἐστησεν ἀνάλογον ἑαυτῷ. *See the Discourse on the Theology of the Pagans.*

* *Pausanias tells us that there were two Urania's, the celestial Venus, and the Venus ἀποστροφία of the Greeks, or Verticordia of the Latins, which is as much as to say, Venus convertens cor suum as well as aliorum. See the Discourse on the Mythology of the Pagans.*

the divine preſence, or to breathe the pure air of the empyreum.

Adonis placed the young goddeſs in a ſtar, in the centre of the univerſe, from whence ſhe could ſee the courſe of all the heavenly bodies, and hear the muſic of the celeſtial ſpheres: he then ſaid to her, beautiful Urania I love you, and deſign you for a more tranſcendent glory than what you at preſent enjoy; I intend to make you my ſpouſe, bleſs you with a happy race that ſhall people the heavens, and conduct you at laſt with all your children into the ſublime place above the ſtars where my father dwells: the only condition I require of you is, that you never wiſh to know more than what ſuits your preſent ſtate, that unreaſonable curioſity would render you both unhappy and criminal: ſuch are the immutable laws of Belus. Urania thought herſelf too happy to enjoy her felicity on ſuch eaſy terms; ſhe loved Adonis more than all the glory that he promiſed her, the ſight of her lover made her forget all his gifts; he looked upon her with complacency, and by this look made her pregnant; ſhe became the mother of all the divinities, without ceaſing to be the immortal virgin; ſhe quickly peopled the ſtars with gods and goddeſſes, who had no other law but that of obeying the will of Adonis, loving each other tenderly as the children of the ſame fa-

ther, and aſpiring by their virtue to become one day worthy of ſeeing the God Belus.

Urania continued long faithful; ſhe followed Adonis every where, he led her through the immenſe ſpaces to ſhew her the numberleſs worlds which he had there produced; he often talked with her of the ſuperior regions, and of the pleaſure which ſhe would one day feel in knowing him of whom all nature is but a faint image, in comparing the original with its pictures, and in ſeeing their various relations. Theſe diſcourſes kindled in her the fatal curioſity, ſhe began to be weary of her happineſs, and had no longer any reliſh for the pleaſures ſhe enjoyed: ſhe durſt not ſpeak, but Adonis perceived the firſt motions of her unfaithfulneſs, and endeavoured to ſtop its progreſs; ſhe grew penſive, melancholy, diſtruſtful, and broke out at laſt in theſe bitter complaints: Adonis, cruel Adonis! why did you give me the idea of a happineſs which makes me miſerable? You promiſed to carry me up to the empyreum, ſhew me the kingdom of your father, and make me partaker of his glory; you ſhould have concealed your deſigns from me, or have accompliſhed them ſooner. Imprudent Urania, replied Adonis, you are going to ruin yourſelf in ſpite of me, you are not yet capable of beholding the god Belus, you would not be able to ſupport the ſplendor of his preſence, he will be loved as he deſerves before he manifeſts

himſelf as he is; the ſmalleſt deſire, the leaſt motion contrary to his order is an incroachment on his rights.

A vain curioſity and an ambitious deſire of knowing overcame the goddeſs, ſhe no longer beheld Adonis with the ſame complacency, ſhe no longer found the ſame charms in his company, ſhe received his careſſes with coldneſs and indifference; he renewed all his endeavours to cure her diſtempered mind, but to no purpoſe; ſhe forced him at length to leave her: the gods are delicate in love, and cannot ſuffer a divided heart; he re-aſcended to his father and left her all alone, hoping that the pains of abſence would recover her from her error. As ſoon as he was gone ſhe renewed her complaints, and tormented herſelf with new reflections; ſhe began to doubt, and by that doubting ſhe became darkened; ſhe ſuſpected all that Adonis had ſaid to her of his father and of the ſuperior regions to be only a chimera; ſhe forgot her origin and her dependent ſtate: to convince her of her error, ſhe was thrown down from the ethereal regions into the ſphere of the ſun; ſhe drew after her the inhabitants of ſeven other ſtars; theſe luminous bodies loſt their light, became planets, and rolled about the ſun to receive its influences: the gods who inhabited them became demi-gods, and the goddeſs Urania was condemned to live in the moon; ſhe now enjoyed

only a borrowed light, was clothed with an aerial and transparent body which the Greeks call the subtile vehicle of the soul; she no longer breathed as formerly the pure aether, which made her life and nourishment; she lived upon nectar and ambrosia with the demigods, whom she had drawn after her in her fall. Adonis ever faithful and ever loving descended into the sun to be nearer to his beloved Urania; he took the name of Apollo, and tried new means to make her sensible of her fault; sometimes she was softened, she yielded to the sun's attraction, and brought her silver car near his rays; then on a sudden she changed her sentiments and wandered from him: she became inconstant and fantastical, she put on new forms according as she retired from her lover or approached to him; she at length gave way to her ambition, and made the inhabitants of the planets adore her under the name of * Astarte, or the Queen of Heaven.

By the laws of immutable fate it was necessary that the goddess should undergo a new metamorphosis as a punishment for her new crime: she fell from the moon to the earth, and took the name of Venus. The inhabitants of the planets did not all follow her example,

* *Quid Urania nisi coeli Regina, Luna, Astarte, Vid. Selden. de Diis Syris. cap. 2. syntag. 2. See Apul. Met. 11.*

ſhe ſeduced but a ſmall number of them, and theſe demi-gods became men, but men of the golden age, they were not yet guilty of groſs crimes, they ſtill preſerved ſome marks of their original nature. The goddeſs by changing her element changed her food, inſtead of ambroſia ſhe fed only upon fruits, inſtead of drinking nectar ſhe quenched her thirſt in limpid ſtreams and clear fountains; ſhe had not as yet loſt either her tranſparency or her agility, ſhe could mount into the air when ſhe pleaſed, but ſhe could not riſe to the ſuperior regions. Adonis left the ſun, took the form of a young man, and came and dwelt with Venus upon earth: at firſt ſhe did not diſcover who he was, and fell in love with him; but having felt his divine influences ſhe knew him, was afraid and fled from him: he purſued her, he called after her, and at laſt ſtopt her; but ſhe eſcaped him again: he could have employed his almighty power, but the gods will be loved by choice; he endeavoured to touch her heart by complaints and tears, by careſſes and threats, but ſhe had no longer any taſte for the refined delights of virtue; her firſt pride was now changed into a profane love of pleaſure, and ſhe forced Adonis to quit her a third time.

The inhabitants of the ſtars ſaw theſe repeated inſtances of Urania's ingratitude, and began to be ſhaken in their obedience: Belus, ſaid they, has no ſuch averſion to vice as we i-

magin'd, ſince he does not puniſh it; ſince rebellion is not followed by miſery, why are we ſubject to laws? 'Tis true Urania is no longer what ſhe was, but ſhe is ſtill a goddeſs and ſtill happy; provided we enjoy pleaſure it is no matter upon what terms; independence and liberty heighten the reliſh of the moſt vulgar enjoyments. An univerſal revolt was breeding through all the celeſtial regions, the deſigns of Belus were going to be fruſtrated: he called up Adonis into that ſolitude above the heavens where he lived with him before the formation of the ſtars, and ſaid to him: I repent me to have drawn the imprudent Urania from her original flower, you ſee her ingratitude and her obſtinacy notwithſtanding all your endeavours to reclaim her; univerſal harmony is diſturbed, the celeſtial monarchy is ſhaken, and the heavenly ſpirits begin to deſpiſe my ſovereign laws: ſhould I pardon the inhabitants of the earth, my clemency would encourage a new revolt, and the ſight of their impunity would have a bad influence on all the inhabitants of the ſtars, who already begin to murmur and to ſuſpect my goodneſs of indifferency with regard to crimes: I cannot vindicate the honour of my laws, nor confirm the immortals in their duty, without annihilating the unfaithful goddeſs and all her rebellious children. Theſe terrible words rent the vault of heaven, reſounded even to the abyſs, and

frighted the kingdom of chaos and eternal night. Belus at length lifted up his ſcepter to replunge the earth and all its inhabitants into their original nothing: Adonis threw himſelf at his father's feet, he with-held his avenging arm by theſe words: I love Urania notwithſtanding her unfaithfulneſs, I ſee her errors and follies with grief, but her children are yours ſince they are mine; puniſh them, but do not entirely deſtroy them; ſhould they enjoy a happy immortality upon earth, they would think no more of re-aſcending to heaven; curſe their habitation, blaſt its beauty, expoſe the guilty race to ſickneſs and death, but let your puniſhments be remedies; all the celeſtial and terreſtrial deities who know the crimes of Urania will ſee alſo her miſery, and be confirmed in their duty by her puniſhment. He ſpoke, and ſuddenly the pillars of the earth were ſhaken, the poles of the heaven changed their ſituation, the ſun grew pale and retired to a greater diſtance, the moon and the five planets altered their motions, thunder, winds and rain mingled and confounded the elements, the herbs and flowers faded, the trees dry'd up and withered, the earth refuſed its uſual bounty, the fruitfulneſs of nature degenerated into a horrible barrenneſs.

Venus ſtruck with terror fell into a long ſwoon, and when ſhe recovered out of it beheld nothing but deſolation all around her; ſhe

found herself in a frightful desert, upon the banks of the river Thammuz, whose plaintive murmurs seemed to proclaim Urania's crime: her misfortunes did not change her heart, she sought to compensate her real miseries by creating herself imaginary pleasures; she caused temples to be erected every where to her honour, she invented impure sacrifices and a prophane worship; her altars were quickly besmeared with the blood of harmless animals; instead of odoriferous herbs and exquisite fruits, she fed upon the flesh of the victims, she sought for all sorts of meats which might excite and nourish her sensuality, she gave herself up to the blind instinct of pleasure, her blood grew thick, and flowed no longer in her veins with the same freedom and amenity; the subtile vehicle of the soul was wrapt round with a terrestrial and gross body; Venus could no longer fly in the air, she lost her lightness and transparency and became mortal; her children underwent the same fate, she saw many of them expire before her eyes by intemperance and voluptuousness; others hoping to shun the decrees of fate heaped mountains upon mountains, and endeavoured to scale heaven; but being struck down and crushed by thunderbolts, they dug themselves an abyss in the bosom of chaos, where Pluto, their chief, erected his empire, and Venus was there adored under the name of Proserpine.

The goddess became frantic, she ran about the mountains and valleys, bewailed her children and worshippers, and blaspheмed against Belus. Adonis heard her, he left the celestial regions and came down upon earth; she perceived him at a distance, and would have thrown herself into the water to hide herself from his presence, but he stopped her and sat down by her; she held down her head with shame and confusion, and was afraid to look upon him; finding at last that he made her no reproach she raised her eyes from the ground, but durst not yet fix them upon his face; she recovered heart by degrees, she observed him nearly, she beheld him pale, meagre and disfigur'd; he had no longer any remains of his former beauty, he was covered with wounds and bruises; he continued a long time silent, and she durst not speak; at last he said to her, Ah Venus, inconstant Venus! you bewail your own miseries, but you are insensible to mine; to what a condition have you reduced me! JUDGE OF YOUR GUILT BY MY SUFFERINGS; the god Belus was going to destroy you and all your race if I had not softened him: I came down myself upon earth to make reparation for your offences against the immutable laws of the empyreum, and to make war with all the monsters which your crimes

have brought forth. * I have killed the ſerpent Python, the Nemean lion, the hydra of Lerna which ſprang from your head when you became falſe, the Centaurs that devoured men, the Cyclops who forged the thunderbolts, the wild boar of Erymanthus that wounded me with his murderous tuſk, the Symphalian birds that ſpoiled the fruits of the earth, and the dragon which had ſeized the garden of Heſperia; I have driven them all down into hell, and am going to purſue them thither that I may compleat my conqueſt: Adonis as he uttered theſe words fell into a mortal agony, a ſtream of blood guſhed forth from his heart and dyed the waters of the river Thammuz. All the children of Venus aſſembled about him, he opened his eyes from time to time, and repeated theſe words with a ſigh, JUDGE OF YOUR GUILT BY MY SUFFERINGS; he continued thus many hours, and at laſt expired through an exceſs of pain. His ſoul deſcended into hell to deliver Theſeus, Pirithoüs, all the heroes vanquiſhed by Pluto, and all the manes that ſuffered in thoſe gloomy habitations.

Venus bewailed her lover for nine days and nine nights: ſhe continued diſconſolate near the dead body, and could not tear herſelf away

* *Mythras, Oſiris, Adonis, Apollo and Hercules are the different names of the middle god. See the Diſcourſe on the Theology of the Pagans.*

from it. Being at length exhauſted with grief ſhe fell into a profound ſleep, nor did ſhe awake till her ears were ſtruck by a heavenly voice; ſhe looked up and beheld Adonis in the air ſurrounded by all the heroes, and all the ſhades which he had brought back from the dark abode. He had reſumed his firſt form and his priſtine beauty; he darted upon her a heavenly ray to reſtore her ſtrength and calm her ſpirit, and then ſaid to her: I have followed you, my dear Urania, I have followed you in all your wanderings; I deſcended into the moon, upon earth, and even into hell to deliver you and your diſloyal children; I have ſuffered all that a god can ſuffer in ſeeing your falſhood and inconſtancy; but you are now no longer inſenſible to my love, and I don't repent of my ſufferings; I leave you, but my wiſdom ſhall never forſake you if you continue faithful to me; farewel, dear Urania, you can ſee me no more till you be transformed into my image, the gods are only enamoured with their own beauty: you muſt ſuffer a thouſand miſeries before this happy metamorphoſis, nor can you re-aſcend to heaven but by the ſame way by which you fell from it; you muſt firſt be ſtripped of your terreſtrial body by ſufferings, diſeaſes and death; you ſhall then riſe to the regions of the moon where you will undergo a * ſecond death by the deſtruction of your aerial

* *See the Diſc. on the Theology of the Pagans.*

body; your pure ſpirit, free and diſengaged from every thing that could ſtop it, will fly away to the ſtars, where you will reſume your former beauty, but you muſt at length loſe even that before you are transformed into my image. When you have undergone theſe three metamorphoſes, explated your guilt by the purifying pains of each new transformation, practiſed upon earth, in the moon and in the ſtars, all the human, heroic and divine virtues, you ſhall aſcend with me into the ſublime place above the heavens, where you ſhall ſee the god Belus, and the goddeſs my mother; virtue, truth and juſtice, not as they are here below, but as they exiſt in him who is Being itſelf. Fear nothing, I will be preſent with you in all theſe ſtates, I will help you to ſupport your ſufferings if you never ceaſe to invoke me: thoſe of your children who ſhall imitate your example ſhall re-aſcend with you to the fields of Hecate, the reſt ſhall deſcend to the gloomy kingdom of Pluto, and be there tormented till they are purified from their crimes. I have chained up the fierce Cerberus, henceforward he ſhall be only the vile inſtrument of my juſtice. † I have eſtabliſhed judges in hell, who will inflict puniſhments only to exterminate vice; they will not annihilate the eſſence of the ſoul, but

† *See the Diſcourſe on the Mythology of the Pagans.*

reſtore it to a true exiſtence by purging it of all irregular paſſions. When your children have been ‡ plunged nine times in the purifying waves of the burning Acheron, the chilling Styx, the black Cocytus, and the foaming Phlegeton, they ſhall at length drink the waters of the river Lethé, which will make them forget all their paſt miſeries and crimes. When there ſhall be no longer any mortal or immortal, in hell, upon earth, or in the planets that is not purified and prepared to behold my father, I will then return to baniſh all evils out of the univerſe, aboliſh hell, and re-eſtabliſh harmony throughout all the immenſity of ſpace; in the mean time aſſemble thoſe of your children who are willing to follow you, inſtitute feſtivals to my honour, and let them be annually celebrated with pomp to perpetuate

‡ *Ergo exercentur poenis, veterumque malorum*
Supplicia expendunt: Aliae panduntur inanes,
Suſpenſae ad ventos; aliis ſub gurgite vaſto
Infectum eluitur ſcelus, aut exurgitur igni.
Donec longa dies perfecto temporis orbe
Concretam exemit labem, purumque reliquit
Aetherium ſenſum, et aurai ſimplicis ignem.
Has omnes ubi mille rotam volvêre per annos,
Lethaeum ad fluvium Deus evocat agmine magno
Scilicet immemores ſupera ut convexa reviſant.

AEN. l. 6. *ver.* 740.

the memory of your unfaithfulneſs and of my love.

Cyrus was overjoyed to ſee that all nations were agreed in the doctrine of the three ſtates of the world, the three forms of the Divinity, and a middle god, who by his conflicts and great ſufferings was to expiate and exterminate moral evil, and reſtore innocence and peace to the univerſe.

While he was yet at Tyre couriers came from Perſia to inform him that Mandana was dying: this news obliged him to ſuſpend his journey to Babylon, and to leave Phoenicia in haſte. At parting he embraced the king of Tyre: O Ecnibal; ſaid he, I envy neither your riches nor your magnificence; to be perfectly happy, I deſire only ſuch a friend as Amenophis. Cyrus and Araſpes croſſed Arabia Deſerta and a part of Chaldea; they paſſed the Tygris near the place where it joins the Euphrates, and entring Suſiana, arrived in a few days at the capital of Perſia. Cyrus haſtened to ſee his mother; he found her dying, and gave himſelf up to grief, which he expreſſed by the moſt bitter complaints. The queen, being tenderly affected with the ſight of her ſon, endeavoured to moderate his affliction by theſe words; Comfort yourſelf, my ſon; ſouls never die; they are only condemned for a time to animate mortal bodies that they may expiate the faults they have committed in a former

ſtate: the time of my expiation is at an end; I am going to re-aſcend to the ſphere of fire; there I ſhall ſee Perſeus, Arbaces, Dejoces, Phraortes, and all the heroes from whom you are deſcended; I will tell them that you reſolve to imitate them: there I ſhall ſee Caſſandana, ſhe loves you ſtill, death changes not the ſentiments of virtuous ſouls: we ſhall be always with you though inviſible, we will deſcend in a cloud and be your protecting genii; we will accompany you in the midſt of dangers; we will engage the virtues to attend you; we will preſerve you from all the errors and vices which corrupt the hearts of princes: one day your dominion will be extended, and the oracles accompliſhed; O my ſon, my dear ſon, remember that you ought to have no other view in conquering nations than to eſtabliſh among them the empire of virtue and reaſon. As ſhe uttered theſe laſt words, ſhe turned pale, a cold ſweat ſpread itſelf over all her limbs, death cloſed her eyes, and her ſoul flew away to the empyreum: ſhe was long lamented by all Perſia, and Cambyſes erected a ſtately monument to her memory. Cyrus's grief wore off only by degrees, and as neceſſity obliged him to apply himſelf to affairs of ſtate.

Cambyſes was a religious and pacific prince; he had never been out of Perſia, the manners of which were innocent and pure, but auſtere and rugged; he knew how to chooſe miniſters

capable of ſupplying what was defective in his own talents; but he ſometimes yielded himſelf up too blindly to their conduct, from a diffidence of his own underſtanding: he prudently reſolved that Cyrus ſhould himſelf enter into the adminiſtration of affairs; and having ſent for him one day, ſaid to him: Your travels, my ſon, have improved your knowledge, and you ought to employ it for the good of your country: you are deſtined not only to govern this kingdom, but alſo, one day, to give law to all Aſia; you ſhould learn betimes the art of reigning, a ſtudy to which princes ſeldom apply themſelves; they aſcend the throne before they know the duties of a king: I intruſt you with my authority, and will have you exerciſe it under my inſpection; the talents of Soranes will not be uſeleſs to you, he is the ſon of an able miniſter, who ſerved me many years with fidelity; he is young, but indefatigable, knowing and qualified for all ſorts of employments.

Under the government of Cambyſes this miniſter had found it neceſſary to appear virtuous, nay, he thought himſelf really ſo, but his virtue had never been put to the trial: Soranes did not himſelf know the exceſs to which his boundleſs ambition could carry him. When Cyrus applied himſelf to learn the ſtate and condition of Perſia, her military ſtrength, and her intereſts both foreign and domeſtic, Soranes

quickly ſaw with concern that he was going to loſe much of his authority under a prince who had all the talents neceſſary for governing by himſelf; he endeavoured to captivate the mind of Cyrus, and ſtudied him a long time to diſcover his weakneſſes. The young prince was not inſenſible to praiſe, but he loved to deſerve it; he had a taſte for pleaſure, but he was not a ſlave to it; he did not diſlike magnificence, but he could refuſe himſelf every thing rather than oppreſs his people: thus he was inacceſſible to flattery, and proof againſt voluptuouſneſs and pomp. Soranes perceived that there was no means to preſerve his credit with Cyrus, but by making himſelf neceſſary to him by his capacity: he diſplayed all his talents both in public and private councils; he ſhewed that he poſſeſſed the ſecrets of the wiſeſt policy, and at the ſame time could enter into that ſort of *detail* in buſineſs, the knowledge of which is one of the chief qualifications of a miniſter; he prepared and digeſted matters with ſo much order and clearneſs that he left his maſter little to do. Any other prince would have been charmed to ſee himſelf exenſed from all application to buſineſs: but Cyrus reſolved to ſee every thing with his own eyes; he had a confidence in his father's miniſters, but he would not blindly yield himſelf up to their councils. When Soranes perceived that the prince would himſelf ſee every thing to the bottom, he ſtu-

died to throw obſcurity over the moſt important affairs, that he might make himſelf yet more neceſſary. Cyrus obſerved the crafty conduct of this able and jealous miniſter, and managed him with ſo much delicacy that he drew from him by degrees what he endeavoured ſo artfully to conceal. When the prince thought himſelf ſufficiently inſtructed, he let Soranes ſee that he would himſelf be his father's firſt miniſter: and in this manner moderated the authority of that favourite without giving him any juſt cauſe of complaint. The ambitious Soranes was nevertheleſs offended at the prince's conduct, and could not, without mortal uneaſineſs, ſee the fall of his credit and that he was no longer neceſſary; this was the firſt ſource of his diſcontent, which might have proved fatal to Cyrus if his virtue and prudence had not preſerved him from its effects.

Perſia had for ſome ages been in ſubjection to Media, but upon the marriage of Cambyſes with Mandana, it had been ſtipulated that the king of Perſia ſhould for the future pay only a ſmall annual tribute as a mark of homage. From that time the Medes and Perſians had lived in perfect amity till the jealouſy of Cyaxares kindled the fire of diſcord. The Median prince was inceſſantly calling to mind with vexation the oracles which were ſpread abroad concerning the future conqueſts of young Cyrus; he conſidered him as the deſtroyer of his

power, and imagined already that he saw him entring Ecbatan to dethrone him; he was every moment soliciting Astyages to prevent those fatal predictions, weaken the strength of Persia, and reduce it to its former dependance. Mandana, while she lived, had so dexterously managed her father as to hinder an open rupture between him and Cambyses: but as soon as she was dead, Cyaxares renewed his solicitations with the Median emperor.

Cambyses was informed of Cyaxares's designs, and sent Hystaspes to the court of Ecbatan, to represent to Astyages the danger of mutually weakening each other's power, while the Assyrians, their common enemy, were forming schemes to extend their domination over all the East. Hystaspes, by his address, put a stop to the execution of Cyaxares's projects, and gained Cambyses time to make his preparations in case of a rupture. The prince of Media seeing that the wise counsels of Hystaspes were favourably listened to by his father, and that there was no means suddenly to kindle a war, attempted by other ways to weaken the power of Persia: being informed of Soranes's discontent, he endeavoured to gain him by an offer of the first dignities in the empire. Soranes at first was shocked at the very thought; but being afterwards deceived by his resentment, he knew not himself the secret motives upon which he had acted; his heart was not yet

become insensible to virtue, but his lively imagination transformed objects, and represented them to him in the colours necessary to flatter his ambition; at length he got the better of all remorse, by reasoning with himself, that Cyaxares would one day be his lawful emperor, and that Cambyses was but a tributary master. There is nothing which we cannot persuade ourselves to think when blinded and drawn away by strong passions. Thus he entred by degrees into a close correspondence with Cyaxares, and secretly employed all means to render Cyrus's administration odious to the Persians.

Cyrus had raised Araspes to the first dignities in the army, upon account of his capacity and talent for war; but he would not bring him into the senate, because it was a law in Persia that no stranger should sit in the supreme council. The perfidious Soranes nevertheless pressed the young prince to infringe this law, knowing that it would be a sure means to excite the jealousy of the Satrapes, and to stir them up against Cyrus. You have need, said he to him, of a man like Araspes in your council: I know that good policy and our rules forbid the intrusting of strangers with the command of an army and the secrets of state at the same time; but a prince may dispense with the laws when he can fulfil the intention of them by more sure and easy ways, and he

ought never to be the ſlave of rules and cuſtoms: men ordinarily act either from ambition or intereſt; load Araſpes with dignities and riches; by that means you will make Perſia his country: and will have no reaſon to doubt his fidelity. Cyrus was not aware of Soranes's ſecret deſign, but he loved juſtice too well to depart from it. I am perſuaded, anſwered the prince, of the fidelity and capacity of Araſpes; I love him ſincerely, but though my friendſhip were capable of making me break the laws in his favour, he is too much attached to me ever to accept a dignity, which might excite the jealouſy of the Perſians, and give them cauſe to think that I was influenced by particular inclination and friendſhip in affairs of ſtate.

Soranes, having in vain attempted to engage Cyrus to take this falſe ſtep, endeavoured to ſurprize him another way, and to create a miſunderſtanding between him and his father: he artfully made him obſerve the king's imperfections, his want of capacity and genius, and the neceſſity of purſuing other maxims than his. The mild and peaceable government of Cambyſes, ſaid he to the prince, is incompatible with noble views; if you content yourſelf like him with a pacific reign, how will you become a conqueror? Cyrus made no other uſe of theſe inſinuations than to avoid the rocks upon which Cambyſes had

ſplit; he did not leſſen his deference and ſubmiſſion to his father whom he tenderly loved; he reſpected him even in his failings, which he endeavoured to conceal; he did nothing without his orders, but conſulted him in ſuch a manner, as at the ſame time to give him a juſt notion of things; he frequently diſcourſed with him in private, that the king might be able to decide in public. Cambyſes had judgment enough to diſtinguiſh, and make himſelf maſter of the excellent advices of his ſon, who employed the ſuperiority of his genius only to make his father's commands reſpected, and never diſplayed his talents but to ſtrengthen the king's authority: ſo admirable a behaviour greatly increaſed Cambyſes's affection and eſteem for him, and his confidence in him; the prince never abuſed it, but continued the ſame conduct, in which he thought he did nothing more than his duty.

Soranes, enraged to ſee all his ſchemes fruſtrated, endeavoured ſecretly to raiſe a diſtruſt in the minds of the Satrapes, as if the prince would incroach upon their rights and ruin their authority; and in order to augment their jealouſy, he endeavoured to inſpire Cyrus with deſpotic principles. You are deſtined by the gods, ſaid he, to ſtretch your empire one day over all the Eaſt; in order to a happy execution of this deſign you ſhould accuſtom the

Persians to a blind obedience; captivate the Satrapes by dignities and pleasures; put them under a necessity of frequenting your court if they would partake of your favours; get the sovereign authority by degrees into your own hands; abridge the rights of the senate, leave it only the privilege of giving you counsel: a prince should not abuse his power, but he ought never to share it with his subjects; monarchy is the most perfect kind of government; the true strength of a state, secrecy in councils, and expedition in enterprizes, depend upon the sovereign power's being lodged in a single person: a petty republic may subsist under the government of many heads, but great empires can be formed only by the absolute authority of one; other principles are the chimerical ideas of weak minds, who are conscious of their want of capacity to execute great designs.

The prince was shocked at this discourse, but concealed his indignation out of prudence, and dextrously breaking off the conversation, left Soranes in a persuasion that he relished his maxims. As soon as Cyrus was alone, he made deep reflections on all that had passed; he called to mind the conduct of Amasis, and began to suspect Soranes's fidelity; he had not indeed any certain proofs of his perfidiousness; but a man who had the boldness to suggest to him such counsels seemed very dangerous at least,

though he should not be a traitor. The young prince by degrees excluded this minister from the secret of affairs, and sought for pretences to remove him from about his person, yet without doing any thing to affront him openly. Sornes quickly perceived this change, and carried his resentment to the last extremities; he persuaded himself that Araspes was going to be put in his place, that Cyrus intended to make himself absolute master in Persia, and that this was the prince's secret view in disciplining his troops with so much exactness. The jealousy and ambition of Sornes blinded him to such a degree, that he imagined he did his duty in practising the blackest treasons. He informed Cyaxares of all that passed in Persia; the augmentation of his forces, the preparations which were making for war, and Cyrus's design of extending his empire over all the East, under pretext of accomplishing certain pretended oracles, by which he imposed upon the people. Cyaxares made advantage of these advices to alarm Astyages, and to insinuate uneasiness and distrust into his mind; Hystaspes was ordered away from the court of Ecbatan, and the emperor threatened Cambyses with a bloody war, if he did not consent to pay the ancient tribute, and return to the same dependance from which Persia had been set free, upon his marriage with Mandana: Cam-

byſes's refuſal was the ſignal of the war, and preparations were made on both ſides †.

In the mean while Soranes endeavoured to corrupt the chief officers of the army and weaken their courage, by inſinuating that Aſtyages was their lawful emperor, that the ambitious deſigns of Cyrus would ruin their country, and that they could never make head againſt the Median troops, who would overwhelm them with numbers. He continued likewiſe to increaſe the diſtruſt of the ſenators, by artfully ſpreading a rumour among them, that Cyrus undertook this war againſt his grandfather, only to weaken their authority, and to uſurp an abſolute power. He concealed all his plots with ſuch art, that it was almoſt impoſſible to diſcover them; every thing he ſaid was with ſo much caution, that there was no ſeeing into his ſecret intentions; nay there were certain moments in which he did not ſee them himſelf, but thought he was ſincere and zealous for the public good: his firſt remorſes returned from time to time, but he ſtifled them by perſuading himſelf that the ill deſigns he imputed to the prince were real. Cyrus was quickly informed of the murmurs of the people; the army was ready to revolt, it was

† *Xenophon has ſuppreſſed this war, but Herodotus and other hiſtorians mention it. See M. Freret's letter.*

doubtful whether the ſenate would give the neceſſary ſubſidies; and the emperor of the Medes was upon the point of entring Perſia at the head of ſixty thouſand men: the prince was in the greateſt grief to ſee the cruel extremities to which his father was reduced, and the neceſſity of taking arms againſt his grandfather.

Cambyſes obſerving the prince's ſtruggles between nature and duty ſaid to him, You know, my ſon, all that I have done to ſtifle the firſt ſeeds of our differences; I have laboured to no purpoſe; the war is inevitable; our country ought to be preferred to our family; hitherto you have aſſiſted me in buſineſs by your prudence, you muſt now give proofs of your courage: would my age allow me to appear at the head of our troops, yet my preſence would be neceſſary here to keep the people in awe; go, my ſon, go and fight for your country; ſhew yourſelf the defender of its liberty, as well as the preſerver of its laws; ſecond the deſigns of Heaven, render yourſelf worthy to accompliſh its oracles; begin by delivering Perſia before you think of extending your conqueſts; let the nations ſee the effects of your courage, and admire your moderation in the midſt of triumphs, that they may not hereafter fear your victories. Cyrus, encouraged by the magnanimous ſentiments of Cambyſes, and aided by the counſels of

Harpagus and Hyſtaſpes, two generals of equal experience, formed an army of thirty thouſand men, compoſed of commanders, with whoſe fidelity he was well acquainted, and veteran troops of known bravery. As ſoon as all preparations were made, they began by ſacrifices and other religious rites. Cyrus after this drew up his troops in a ſpacious plain near the capital, aſſembled the ſenate and the Satrapes, and with a ſweet and majeſtic air thus harangued the officers of his army.

War is unlawful when it is not neceſſary; that which we at preſent undertake is not to ſatisfy ambition or the deſire of domination, but to defend our liberties: it is true your enemies underſtand military diſcipline, and they ſurpaſs us in number; but they are ſoftened by luxury and a long peace; your ſouls are full of that noble ardour which makes men deſpiſe death when they are to fight for liberty; your ſevere life has accuſtomed you to fatigue; nothing is impoſſible to thoſe whom no ſufferings nor difficult enterprizes can diſheartent: as for me, I will diſtinguiſh myſelf from you in nothing but in leading the way through labours and dangers; all our proſperities and all our misfortunes ſhall hereafter be common. He then turned to the ſenators, and with a fierce and ſevere countenance ſaid, Cambyſes is not ignorant of the intrigues at the court of Ecbatan, to ſow jealouſy and diſtruſt in your

minds; he knows that you hesitate about giving him subsidies, but having foreseen the war he has taken his precautions, one battle will decide the fate of Persia, he does not want your assistance: however, remember that the liberty of your country is at present in question; is not this liberty more secure in the hands of my father your lawful prince, than in those of the emperor of the Medes, who holds all the neighbouring kings in a tributary dependance? If Cambyses should be vanquished, your privileges are lost for ever; if he prove victorious they will be preserved to you, unless you force the justice of a prince, whom you have incensed by your secret cabals, to deprive you of them. The prince by this discourse intimidated some, confirmed others in their duty, and united all in one design of contributing to the preservation of their country. Soranes appeared more zealous than any, and earnestly requested to have some command in the army: but as Cyrus had not concealed from Cambyses his just suspicions of that minister, the king did not suffer himself to be imposed upon by appearances; under pretext of providing for the security of the capital, he kept him near his person, but gave orders to watch his conduct; so that Soranes was a prisoner without perceiving it.

Cyrus having learnt that Astyages had marched his troops through the deserts of I-

ſatis in order to enter Perſia, prevented him by a moſt ſurpriſing diligence: he croſs'd over craggy mountains, the paſſes of which he ſecured, and gain'd the plains of Paſargarda by ſuch routs as would have been impracticable to any other than an army accuſtomed to fatigue, and conducted by ſo active and vigilant a general. Cyrus ſeiz'd the moſt advantageous poſts, and encamped near a ridge of mountains which defended him on one ſide, fortifying himſelf on the other by a double entrenchment. Aſtyages quickly appeared, and encamped in the ſame plain near a lake, and the two armies continued in ſight of each other for ſeveral days. Cyrus could not without great concern look forward to the conſequences of a war againſt his grandfather, and therefore employed this time in ſending to Aſtyages's camp a Satrap, named Artabaſus, who ſpoke to the emperor in the following manner: Cyrus, your grandſon, has an abhorrence of the war which he has been forced to undertake againſt you: he has neglected nothing to prevent it, nor will refuſe any means to put an end to it; he is not deaf to the voice of nature, but he cannot ſacrifice the liberty of the Perſians; he would willingly reconcile by an honourable treaty the love of his country with filial affection; he is in a condition to make war, but at the ſame time is not aſhamed to aſk peace. The emperor, ſtill irritated by Cyaxares, par-

sisted in his first resolution, and Artabasus returned without succeeding in his negotiation.

Cyrus seeing himself reduced to the necessity of hazarding a battle, and knowing of what importance it is, in affairs of war, to deliberate with many, to decide with few, and to execute with speed, assembled his principal officers and heard all their opinions; he then took his resolution, which he communicated only to Hystaspes and Harpagus. The day following he caused a rumour to be spread in the army of the enemy, that he intended to retire, not daring to engage with unequal forces. Before he left the camp he ordered the usual sacrifices to be offered; he made libations of wine, and all the chief officers did the same: He gave for the word, MYTHRAS THE CONDUCTOR AND SAVIOUR, and then mounting his horse commanded every man to his post. The soldiers cuirasses were composed of plates of iron of divers colours, and like the scales of fish; their casques were of brass, adorned with a great white feather; over their shields, made of willow twigs interwoven, hung their quivers; their darts were short, their bows long, their arrows made of canes, and their scymitars hung upon their right thighs. The royal standard was a golden eagle with its wings expanded; the kings of Persia have ever since had the same.

Cyrus decamped by night, and advanced in

the plains of Paſſagarda; Aſtyages, imagining that the prince fled before him, made haſte to come up with him by ſun-riſing; Cyrus on a ſudden drew up his army in order of battle, and only twelve deep, that the javelins and darts of the laſt rank might reach the enemy, and that all the parts might ſupport and aſſiſt each other without confuſion: he choſe out of each battalion a ſelect company, of which he formed a triangular phalanx after the manner of the Greeks; he placed this body of reſerve behind his army, commanding it not to ſtir till he himſelf ſhould give expreſs orders. The plain was covered with duſt and ſand, and the North-wind blew hard. Cyrus by wheeling a little poſted his army ſo advantageouſly, that the riſing duſt was driven full in the faces of the Medes, and favoured his ſtratagem; Harpagus commanded the right wing, Hyſtaſpes the left, Araſpes the centre, and Cyrus was preſent every where. The army of the Medes was compoſed of ſeveral ſquare battalions thirty deep, all ſtanding cloſe to be the more impenetrable; in the front were the chariots, with great ſcythes faſtened to the axle-trees.

Cyrus ordered Harpagus and Hyſtaſpes to extend the two wings by degrees, in order to incloſe the Medes. While he was ſpeaking he heard a clap of thunder: We follow thee, great Oromazes, cried he, and in the ſame inſtant began the hymn of battle, to which all

the troops anſwered with loud ſhouts, invoking the god Mythras. Cyrus's army preſented its front in a ſtrait line to deceive Aſtyages; but the centre marching ſlower, and the wings faſter, the whole was ſoon formed into a creſcent. The Medes broke through the firſt ranks of the centre, and advanced to the laſt; they began already to cry, Victory! but then Cyrus advanced with his body of reſerve, while Harpagus and Hyſtaſpes ſurrounded the enemy on all ſides, and the battle was renewed. The triangular phalanx of the Perſians pierced the battalions of the Medes, and turned aſide their chariots: Cyrus, mounted on a foaming ſteed, flew from rank to rank; the fire of his eyes animated the ſoldiers, and the ſerenity of his countenance baniſhed all fear: in the heat of battle he was active, calm and preſent to himſelf; he ſpoke to ſome, encouraged others by ſigns, and kept every one in his poſt. The Medes being ſurrounded on all ſides were attacked in front, in rear and in flank; the Perſians cloſed in upon them and cut them in pieces; nothing was heard but the claſhing of arms and the groans of the dying; ſtreams of blood covered the plain; deſpair, rage and cruelty ſpread ſlaughter and death every where: Cyrus alone felt a generous pity; Aſtyages and Cyaxares being taken priſoners, he gave orders to ſound a retreat and put an end to the battle.

Cyaxares, inflamed with rage and with all the paſſions that take hold of a proud mind when fallen from its hopes, would not ſee Cyrus: he pretended to be wounded, and ſent to aſk permiſſion to return to Ecbatan, to which Cyrus conſented. Aſtyages was conducted with pomp to the capital of Perſia, not like a conquered prince, but like a victorious one: being no longer importuned by the evil counſels of his ſon, he made a peace, and Perſia was declared a free kingdom for ever; this was the firſt ſervice that Cyrus did his country. The ſucceſs of this war, ſo contrary to the expectation of Soranes, opened his eyes. Had the event been anſwerable to his deſires, he would ſtill have continued in his perfidiouſneſs; but finding that his projects were diſconcerted, and that it was impoſſible to conceal them any longer, he ſhrunk with horror to behold the dreadful condition into which he had brought himſelf, the crimes he had committed, and the certain diſgrace which would follow: not able to endure this proſpect, he fell into deſpair, killed himſelf, and left a ſad example to poſterity of the exceſſes to which boundleſs ambition may carry the greateſt genius's, even when their hearts are not entirely corrupted. After his death Cyrus was informed of all the particulars of his treachery. The prince, without applauding himſelf for having early ſeen into the character of this miniſter, be-

held with concern, and lamented the unhappy condition of man, who often loſes all the fruit of his talents, and ſometimes precipitates himſelf into the greateſt crimes, by giving way to an unruly imagination and a blind paſſion.

As ſoon as the peace was concluded Aſtyages returned into his own dominions. After his departure Cyrus aſſembled the ſenators, Satrapes and all the heads of the people, and ſaid to them in the name of the king: My father's arms have ſet Perſia free from all foreign dependance. He might now, with a victorious army at his devotion, deſtroy your privileges, and govern with abſolute authority; but he abhors ſuch maxims: it is only under the empire of Arimanius that force alone preſides; princes are the images of the great Oromazes, and ought to imitate his conduct; his ſovereign reaſon is the rule of his will: how wiſe and juſt ſoever princes may be, they are ſtill but men, and conſequently have prejudices and paſſions; nay, were they exempt from theſe, they cannot ſee and hear every thing; they have need of faithful counſellors to inform and aſſiſt them. 'Tis thus that Cambyſes reſolves to govern; he will reſerve no more power than is neceſſary to do good, and chooſes to have ſuch reſtraints as may hinder him from doing ill: Senators baniſh your fears; lay aſide your diſtruſts; recognize your king: he preſerves all your rights to you;

assist him in making the Persians happy; he desires to reign over free children, and not over slaves. At these words joy was diffused through the whole assembly. Some cried out, Is not this the god Mythras himself come down from the empyreum to renew the reign of Oromazes? others, dissolved in tears, were unable to speak: the old men looked on him as their son, the young men called him father; all Persia seemed but one family. It was thus that Cyrus avoided all the snares of Soranes, triumphed over the plots of Cyaxares, and restored liberty to the Persians: he never had recourse to cowardly artifice, or mean dissimulation unworthy of great souls.

Astyages died soon after his return to Ecbatan, and left the empire to Cyaxares. Cambyses foreseeing that the turbulent and jealous spirit of that prince would soon excite new disturbances, resolved to seek an alliance with the Assyrians. The emperor of Media and the king of Babylon had been for an hundred years past the two rival powers of the East; they were continually endeavouring to weaken each other in order to become masters of Asia. Cambyses, who knew his son's abilities, proposed to him that he should go in person to the court of Nabuchodonosor, to treat with Amytis, the wife of that prince and sister of Mandana; she governed the kingdom during the king's madness, Cyrus had been hindered from going thi-

ther some years before by his mother's sickness: he was exceedingly pleased with a journey to Babylon, not only that he might serve his country, but that he might likewise have an opportunity of conversing with the Hebrews, whose oracles (as he had learned from Zoroaster), contained predictions of his future greatness; and he had no less desire to see the miserable condition of king Nabuchodonosor, the report of which was spread over all the East. Having filled the council and senate with men of approved loyalty and capacity, he left Persia, crossed Susiana, and soon arrived at Babylon.

THE TRAVELS OF CYRUS.

EIGHTH BOOK.

BABYLON, the seat of the Assyrian monarch, had been founded by Semiramis, but Nabuchodonosor had given it its principal beauties. This conqueror after long and difficult wars, finding himself in perfect tranquillity, applied his thoughts to make his capital one of the wonders of the world. It was situated in a vast plain, watered by the Euphrates; the canals cut from this river made the fruitfulness of the soil so great, that it yielded the king as much as the half of his empire. † The walls of the city were built of large brick, cemented together with bitumen, or a slime arising out of the earth, which in time became harder than marble; they were fifty cubits thick, two hundred high, and formed a perfect square

† *See Herod. l.* 1. *Diod. Sic. lib.* 2. *Q. Curt. lib.* 5. *and Prideaux.*

twenty leagues in compaſs; an hundred and fifty towers, raiſed at certain diſtances upon theſe inacceſſible walls, commanded all the country round about; an hundred gates of braſs regularly diſpoſed opened to an innumerable multitude of people of all nations; fifty great ſtreets traverſed the city from ſide to ſide, and by croſſing each other formed above ſix hundred large diviſions, in which were ſtately palaces, delightful gardens, and magnificent ſquares. The Euphrates flowed through the middle of Babylon, and over that river was a bridge built with ſurpriſing art; at its two extremities were two palaces, the old one to the Eaſt, the new one to the Weſt; near the old palace was the temple of Belus, from the centre of this building roſe a pyramid ſix hundred foot high, and compoſed of eight towers one above another; from the top of this pyramid the Babylonians obſerved the motions of the ſtars, which was their favourite ſtudy, and by which they made themſelves famous in other nations. At the other end of the bridge ſtood the new palace, which was eight miles in circuit; its famous hanging gardens, which were ſo many large terraſſes one above another, roſe like an amphitheatre to the height of the city walls; the whole maſs was ſupported by divers arches built upon other arches, all covered with broad ſtones ſtrongly cemented, and over them was firſt a layer of reed mixed with bitumen, then

two rows of bricks, and over these thick sheets of lead, which made the whole impenetrable to rain or any moisture; the mould which covered all was of that depth as to have room enough for the greatest trees to take root in it: in these gardens were long walks, which ran as far as the eye could reach; bowers, green plots and flowers of all kinds; canals, basons and aqueducts to water and adorn this place of delights; a most surprizing collection of all the beauties of nature and art.

The author or rather the creator of so many prodigies, equal to Hercules in bravery, and superior to the greatest men by his genius, was, after incredible successes, fallen into a kind of madness; he imagined himself transformed into a beast, and had all the fierceness of one. As soon as Cyrus was arrived at Babylon, he went to see queen Amytis: this princess had for near seven years been plunged in a deep sadness; but she was beginning to moderate her grief, because the Hebrews, who were then captives in the city, had promised her that the king should be cured in a few days. The queen was waiting that happy moment with great impatience; the wonders she had seen performed by Daniel made her confide in what he said. Cyrus, from a respectful consideration of the affliction of Amytis, avoided speaking to her concerning the principal design of his journey; he was sensible that it was not a favourable conjunc-

ture to treat of political affairs, and waited for the king's cure, though with little hopes: in the mean while he endeavoured to satisfy his curiosity touching the religion and manners of the Israelites. Daniel was not then at Babylon, but was gone to visit and console the Hebrews dispersed throughout Assyria. Amytis made Cyrus acquainted with an illustrious Hebrew named Eleazar: the prince being informed that the people of God did not look upon the king's frenzy as a natural distemper, but as a punishment from heaven, desired the Hebrew philosopher to tell him the reason of it.

Nabuchodonosor, said the Hebrew sage, being led away by impious men who were about him, came at length to such an excess of irreligion, that he blasphemed against THE MOST HIGH; and to crown his impiety, he erected a golden statue of an enormous size in the plain of Dura, and commanded that it should be adored by all the nations he had subdued. He was admonished by divine dreams, that he should be punished for his idolatry and pride in this life: a Hebrew named Daniel, a man famous for science, virtue and his knowledge of futurity, explained to him those dreams, and denounced God's judgments which were ready to fall upon him. The words of the prophet made at first some impression upon the king's mind; but being surrounded by profane men who despised the heavenly powers, he neglected the divine ad-

monition, and gave himself up anew to his impiety. At the end of the year, while he was walking in his gardens, admiring the beauty of his own works, the splendor of his glory, and the greatness of his empire, he exalted himself above humanity, and became an idolater of his own proud imaginations. He heard a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nabuchodonosor, to thee it is spoken, The kingdom is departed from thee, and they shall drive thee from men, and thou shalt eat grass as the beasts of the field till seven years are passed, and until thou know that THE MOST HIGH ruleth over all the kingdoms of the universe, and giveth them to whomsoever he will. In the same hour was the thing fulfilled and his reason was taken from him; he was seized with a frenzy, and with fits of raging madness; in vain they attempted to hold him by chains; he broke all his irons and ran away into the mountains and plains, roaring like a lion; no one can approach him without running the hazard of being torn in pieces. He has no repose nor intervals of reason except one day in the week, which is the Sabbath †; he then holds discourses which should strike the impious with terror. It is now almost seven years that he

† *See Megast. and Abyden. quoted by Josephus. Ant. lib. 10. cap. 11. and by Eusеb. Praep. Evang. lib. 9. cap. 41.*

has been in this condition, and we are expecting his total recovery in a few days, according to the divine prediction.

Here Cyrus sighed, and could not forbear saying, In all the countries through which I pass, I see nothing but sad examples of the weakness and misfortunes of princes: in Egypt Apries suffers himself to be made a sacrifice by his blind friendship for a perfidious favourite; at Sparta two young kings were going to ruin the state, if not prevented by the wisdom of Chilo; the deplorable fate of Periander and his whole family at Corinth, will be a dreadful example to posterity of the miseries which tyrants and usurpers draw upon themselves; at Athens Pisistratus is twice dethroned; Polycrates king of Samos suffers himself to be imposed upon so far as to persecute innocence; in Crete the successors of Minos have destroyed the most perfect of all governments; here Nabuchodonosor draws upon himself the wrath of heaven by his impiety: great Oromazes! was it only in your anger then that you gave kings to mortals? Are grandeur and virtue incompatible?

The morning of the Sabbath, Cyrus, accompanied by Eleazar, went to the place which the king of Babylon frequented; they beheld the unfortunate prince come out of the Euphrates, and lye down under some willows which were upon the banks of the river.

They approached him in ſilence; he was ſtretched upon the graſs with his eyes turned towards heaven; from time to time he ſent forth deep ſighs, accompanied with bitter tears; in the midſt of his misfortunes there was ſtill upon his face an air of greatneſs, which ſhewed that THE MOST HIGH in puniſhing had not entirely forſaken him: they forbore out of reſpect to ſpeak to him, or to interrupt the profound grief in which he ſeemed to be plunged. Cyrus deeply ſtruck with the ſad ſituation of this great prince ſtood immoveable, and on his countenance appeared all the tokens of a ſoul ſeized with terror and compaſſion: the king of Babylon obſerved it, and without knowing who he was ſaid to him: Heaven ſuffers me to have intervals of reaſon, to make me ſenſible that I do not poſſeſs it as a property; that it comes from another; that a ſuperior being takes it from me and reſtores it when he pleaſes; and that he who gives it me is a ſovereign intelligence, who holds all nature in his hand, and can diſpoſe it in order, or overturn it according to his pleaſure. Heretofore being blinded by pride and corrupted by proſperity, I ſaid within myſelf, and to all the falſe friends who were about me; We are born as it were by chance, and after death we ſhall be as if we had never been; the ſoul is a ſpark of fire which goes out when the body is reduced to aſhes; come, let us enjoy the preſent good,

let us make haſte to exhauſt all pleaſures; let us drink the moſt delicious wines, and perfume ourſelves with odoriferous oils; let us crown ourſelves with roſes before they wither; let ſtrength be our only law, and pleaſure the rule of our duty; let us make the juſt fall into our ſnares, becauſe he diſhonours us by his virtue; let us examine him with affronts and torments, that we may ſee whether he be ſincere. Thus it was that I blaſphemed againſt Heaven, and this is the ſource of my miſeries; alas! I have but too much deſerved them. Scarce had he pronounced theſe words, when he ſtarted up, ran away, and hid himſelf in the neighbouring foreſt.

The words of Nabuchodonoſor augmented the young prince's reſpect for the Deity, and redoubled his deſire of being fully inſtructed in the religion of the Hebrews; he frequently ſaw Eleazar, and by degrees contracted a cloſe friendſhip with him. The Eternal being watchful over Cyrus, whom he had choſen to bring about the deliverance of his people, thought fit to prepare him by his converſation with the Hebrew ſage, to receive ſoon after the inſtructions of the prophet Daniel. Ever ſince the captivity of the Iſraelites, the Hebrew doctors, who were diſperſed in ſeveral nations, had applied themſelves to the ſtudy of the profane ſciences, and endeavoured to reconcile religion with philoſophy: in order thereto they em-

braced or forsook the literal sense of the sacred books, according as it suited with their notions, or was repugnant to them: they taught that the Hebrew traditions were often folded up in allegories, according to the Eastern custom, but they pretended to explain them; and this was what gave rise afterwards to that famous sect among the Hebrews called the Allegorists. Eleazar was of the number of those philosophers, and was with reason esteemed one of the greatest genius's of his age; he was versed in all the sciences of the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and had held several disputes with the eastern Magi, to prove that the religion of the Hebrews was not only the most ancient, but the most conformable to reason. Cyrus having divers times discoursed with Eleazar upon all he had learned in Persia, Egypt and Greece, concerning the great revolutions which had happened in the universe, desired him one day to explain to him the doctrine of the Hebrew philosophers, concerning the three states of the world.

† We adore, answered Eleazar, but one only God, infinite, eternal, immense: he has defined himself, HE WHO IS, to denote, that he exists of himself, and that all other beings exist only by him: being rich by the riches of his own nature, and happy by his own supreme fe-

† *See the Diss. on the Mythology of the Pagans.*

licity, he had no need to produce other ſubſtances to augment his glory; nevertheleſs, by a noble and free effort of his beneficent will, he has created divers orders of intelligences to make them happy. Man firſt forms the plan of his work before he executes it; but THE ETERNAL conceives, produces and diſpoſes every thing in order, by the ſame act, without labour or ſucceſſion: he thinks, and immediately all the poſſible ways of repreſenting himſelf outwardly appear before him; a world of ideas preſents itſelf to the divine intellect. He wills, and inſtantly real beings reſembling thoſe ideas exiſt in his immenſity; the whole univerſe and the vaſt expanſe of nature, diſtinct from the divine eſſence, is produced. The Creator has repreſented himſelf two ways, by ſimple pictures, and by living images. Hence there are two ſorts of creatures eſſentially different, material nature and intelligent nature; the one repreſents only ſome perfections of its original, the other knows and enjoys it; there are an infinite number of ſpheres full of ſuch intelligent beings. Sometimes theſe ſpirits plunge themſelves into the unfathomable depths of the divine nature to adore its beauties, which are ever new; at other times they admire the perfections of the Creator in his works: this is their two-fold happineſs: they cannot inceſſantly contemplate the ſplendor of the divine eſſence; their weak and finite na-

ture requires that they ſhould ſometimes veil their eyes; this is the reaſon why the material world was created, the refreſhment of the intellectual.

Two ſorts of ſpirits loſt this happineſs by their diſloyalty; the one called Cherubim, were of a ſuperior order, and are now infernal ſpirits; the other called Iſchim, were of a leſs perfect nature; theſe are the ſouls which actually inhabit mortal bodies. The chief of the cherubim approached nearer the throne than the other ſpirits: he was crowned with the moſt excellent gifts of THE MOST HIGH, but loſt his wiſdom by a vain complacency in himſelf: being enamoured with his own beauty, he beheld and conſidered himſelf, and was dazzled with the luſtre of his own light; he grew proud, rebelled, and drew into his rebellion the greater part of the genii of his order. The Iſchim became too much attached to material objects, and in the enjoyment of created pleaſures, forgot the ſupreme beatitude of ſpirits; the firſt were too much elated with pride, the ſecond debaſed themſelves by ſenſuality. Upon this there happened a great revolution in the heavens; the ſphere of the cherubim became a dark chaos, where thoſe unhappy intelligences deplore, without conſolation, their loſt felicity. The Iſchim being leſs guilty, becauſe they had ſinned through weakneſs, were leſs ſeverely puniſhed: that they might forget their

former ſtate, God ſuffered them to fall into a kind of lethargy or total inſenſibility, from which they awake only to enter ſucceſſively into mortal bodies: the organic moulds of all human bodies were ſhut up in that of Adam, and the order of generation was eſtabliſhed; each ſoul awakens in ſuch a body, and in ſuch time, place and circumſtances as ſuit beſt with the decrees of eternal Wiſdom: the earth changed its form, it was no longer a garden of delights, but a place of baniſhment and miſery, where the continual war of the elements ſubjected man to diſeaſes and death. This is the hidden meaning of the great Hebrew law-giver, when he ſpeaks of the terreſtrial paradiſe, and of the fall of our firſt parents. Adam does not repreſent one ſingle man, but all mankind. * Every nation has its allegories, and we have ours: thoſe who do not comprehend them look upon our hiſtory of the forbidden fruit and of the ſpeaking ſerpent as fables more abſurd than the Mythology of the Perſians, Egyptians and Greeks concerning the fall of Arimanius, the rebellion of Typhon, and the golden apples in the garden of the Heſperides: all theſe allegories are founded upon the ſame tradition more or leſs diſguiſed. The weak and ignorant in every religion ſtick to the letter which kills,

* *See the Diſcourſe on the Mythology of the Pagans.*

and the impious laugh at it; but neither the one nor the other understand the spirit which gives life.

Souls being once disunited from their origin had no longer any fixed principle of union; the order of generation, mutual wants and self-love became here below the only bonds of our transient society, and took the place of justice, friendship and the love of order, which unite the heavenly spirits. Divers other changes happened in this mortal abode, suitable to the state of souls who suffer, and deserve to suffer, and are to be cured by their sufferings. In the end the great prophet, whom we call the MESSIAH, will come and restore order in the universe: it is he who is the head, and the conductor of all intelligent natures; he is the first-born of all creatures; the Deity united himself to him in an intimate manner from the beginning of time, and he has united himself to a portion of matter which serves him for a tabernacle; from this luminous center incessantly stream rays that enlighten all the regions of immensity; this glorious body is the sun of the heavenly Jerusalem; the emanations of this adorable SHECHINAH are the life and light of all bodies, as those of his Divinity are the reason and happiness of all intelligences: it was this Messiah who conversed with our fathers under a human form; it was he who appeared to our law-giver, upon the holy mount;

it was he who ſpoke to the prophets under a viſible appearance; it is he who will at laſt come in triumph upon the clouds, to reſtore the univerſe to its primitive ſplendor and felicity. How auguſt a thing is religion, how worthy of God, how ſublime in its ſimplicity when the vail which hides it from profane eyes is removed!

Cyrus tranſported with theſe ſublime ideas would by no means interrupt the philoſopher; but ſeeing that he had done ſpeaking he ſaid: I find that your Theology is perfectly conformable to the doctrine of the Perſians, Egyptians and Greeks, concerning the three ſtates of the world. Zoroaſter being verſed in the ſciences of the Gymnoſophiſts, ſpoke to me of the empire of Oromazes before the rebellion of Arimanius, as of a ſtate in which all ſpirits were happy and perfect: In Egypt the religion of Hermes repreſents the reign of Oſiris, before the monſter Typhon broke through the mundane egg, as a ſtate exempt from miſeries and paſſions: Orpheus has ſung the golden age as a ſtate of ſimplicity and innocence. Each nation has formed an idea of this primitive world according to its genius; the Magi, who are all aſtronomers, have placed it in the ſtars; the Egyptians, who are all philoſophers, have fancied it a republic of ſages; the Greeks, who delight in rural ſcenes, have deſcribed it as a country of ſhepherds. I farther obſerve that the

traditions of all nations foretel the coming of a hero, who is to descend from heaven to bring back Astraea to the earth: the Persians call him Mythras, the Egyptians Orus, the Tyrians Adonis, the Greeks Apollo, Hercules, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter the Conductor and Saviour. It is true they differ in their descriptions, but all agree in the same truths; they are all sensible that man is not now what he was, and believe that he will one day assume a more perfect form; God cannot suffer an eternal blemish in his work; evil had a beginning and it will have an end; then will be the triumph of light over darkness; that is the time fixed by destiny for the total destruction of Typhon, Arimanius and Pluto, the prescribed period in all religions for re-establishing the reign of Oromazes, Osiris, Belus and Saturn. Nevertheless there arises one great difficulty, which no philosopher has yet been able to solve me. I do not conceive how evil could happen under the government of a God who is good, wise and powerful; if he be wise he might have foreseen it; if he be powerful he might have hindered it; and if he be good he would have prevented it: shew me which way to justify the eternal Wisdom; why has God created free beings, intelligences capable of evil? Why has he bestowed on them so fatal a gift?

Liberty, answered Eleazar, is a necessary consequence of our reasonable nature. To be

free is to be able to chooſe; to chooſe is to prefer: every being capable of reaſoning and comparing can prefer, and conſequently chooſe. It is true, in every choice we neceſſarily chooſe what appears to us the beſt, but we can ſuſpend our choice till we have examined whether the good that preſents itſelf be a real good or only an apparent one: the ſoul is not free to ſee or not ſee the objects ſhe looks upon, to diſcern or not diſcern their differences when ſhe ſees them, or to chooſe without a reaſon for chooſing; but ſhe is free to look or not look, to conſider objects on one ſide only or on ſeveral, to chooſe them for a good or for a bad reaſon: we are never invincibly captivated by any finite good, becauſe we are able to think of a greater good, and ſo may diſcover a ſuperior charm which will carry us away from the leſs attractive object; and it is on this activity natural to all rational beings that liberty depends: ſpirits only are active and capable of ſelf-motion: God gives them activity as well as being; an activity different from his, as well as a ſubſtance diſtinct from his. One of the eſſential differences between bodies and ſouls is this, the one are neceſſarily tranſported wherever the moving power carries them, the other ſuffer themſelves to be moved only by the reaſon that enlightens them. God could not give us intelligence without giving us liberty.

But could he not, replied Cyrus, have hin-

dered us from abuſing our liberty, by ſhewing us truth with ſo clear an evidence, that it would have been impoſſible to miſtake? When the ſovereign beauty diſplays his infinitely attractive charms they ſeize and engroſs the whole will, and make all inferior amiableneſs vaniſh, as the riſing ſun diſpels the ſhades of night. The pureſt light, anſwered Eleazar, does not illuminate thoſe who will not ſee; now every finite intelligence may turn away his eyes from the truth. I have already told you that ſpirits cannot inceſſantly contemplate the ſplendors of the divine Eſſence; they are obliged from time to time to cover their faces; it is then that ſelf-love may ſeduce them and make them take an apparent good for a real one; this falſe good may dazzle them and draw them away from the true good. Self-love is inſeparable from our nature. God in loving himſelf eſſentially loves order, becauſe He is Order; but the creature may love itſelf without loving order; to what degree of perfection ſoever we ſuppoſe it raiſed, it is ſtill finite, and conſequently capable of purſuing, contrary to the will of the Creator, a good which it has not in its poſſeſſion; hence every created ſpirit is neceſſarily and eſſentially fallible: To aſk why God has made fallible intelligences, is to aſk why he has made them finite, or why he has not created gods as perfect as himſelf: a thing impoſſible.

Cannot God, continued Cyrus, employ his almighty power, to force free intelligences to ſee and reliſh truth? Under the empire of God himſelf, anſwered Eleazar, deſpotic rule and liberty are incompatible. God does every thing he pleaſes in heaven and upon earth; but he will not employ his abſolute power to deſtroy the free nature of intelligent beings; if he did, they would act no longer from choice but neceſſity; they would obey, but they would not love: now love is what God demands, and it is the only worſhip worthy of him: he does not require it for any advantage to himſelf, but for the good of his creatures; he will have them happy and contribute to their own happineſs; happy by love, and by a love of pure choice: it is thus that their merit augments their felicity.

But could not the Deity, ſaid Cyrus, have employed infallible means to ſecure the happineſs of intelligent beings, without violating their liberty? Has he not a ſovereign dominion over ſpirits as well as bodies? Can he not change the moſt rebellious and ſtubborn wills, and make them pliable and ſubmiſſive to his orders? In a word, cou'd he not have found expedients in the inexhauſtible treaſures of his power, wiſdom and goodneſs, to ſubject free agents as well as neceſſary ones to his eternal purpoſes? Doubtleſs, anſwered Eleazar, we cannot form too high an idea of the perfections

of the infinitely perfect Being; he wills the happineſs of all intelligences, knows all the means requiſite to accompliſh his will, and ſooner or later will render thoſe means abſolutely and infallibly efficacious without violating the liberty of ſpirits. The permiſſion of ſin, expiatory pains, and all the fatal conſequences of our rebellion, are a part of thoſe means and of the plan of his adorable providence. God firſt exerted all the efforts of his power, he exhauſted, ſo to ſpeak, all the treaſures of his wiſdom, he diſplayed all the charms of his goodneſs, he neglected nothing to prevent the fall of ſpirits. Seeing at laſt that he could not keep them in the love of order, without violating their liberty, he left them for a moment to the fatal conſequences of their wandrings, becauſe he knew how to make all end in the accompliſhment of his decrees. He who calls being out of nothing can draw an infinite good from a tranſient evil, order from confuſion, the univerſal beauty of his work from a ſlight blemiſh which he ſuffers in it, and the permanent happineſs of all ſpirits from the momentaneous pains which a ſmall number of intelligences ſuffer by their own fault. All the heavenly hoſts are ſpectators of what paſſes here below, and are confirmed for ever in the love of order, by ſeeing the terrible effects and natural conſequences of our unfaithfulneſs. This is the reaſon why God ſuffers evil for a moment; our

example is an eternal leſſon to all ſpirits. The conduct of God offends us only becauſe we are finite and mortal: we ſee not the whole plan of it, we judge of it only by ſmall pieces. Let us raiſe our thoughts above this place of baniſhment, let us run over all the celeſtial regions, we ſhall ſee diſorder and evil no where but in this corner of the univerſe. The earth is but an atom in compariſon of immenſity; the whole extent of time is but a moment in reſpect of eternity: theſe two infinitely ſmall points will one day diſappear; yet a little moment and evil will be no more; but our limited minds and our ſelf-love magnify objects, and make us look upon that point which divides the two eternities as ſomething great.

Could not the infinite goodneſs of God, ſaid Cyrus, have brought back his offending creatures to order without making them ſuffer? A good father will never make uſe of puniſhments when he can gain his children by mildneſs.

I have already told you, anſwered Eleazar, that we are capable of a twofold happineſs: ſhould God, after our rebellion, continue to us the full enjoyment of created pleaſure, we ſhould never aſpire to an union with the Creator; we ſhould content ourſelves with an inferior happineſs, without any endeavours to attain to the ſupreme beatitude of our nature. The only means to hinder free beings from re-

lapſing into diſorder, is to make them feel for a time the fatal conſequences of their error. God owes it to his juſtice to puniſh the guilty, that he may not countenance crimes; and his goodneſs likewiſe requires it, in order to correct and reform the criminal. Natural evil is neceſſary to cure moral evil; ſuffering is the only remedy for ſin. All will ſuffer more or leſs in proportion as they are more or leſs gone aſtray: thoſe who have never departed from their duty, will for ever excel the reſt in knowledge and in happineſs; thoſe who delay their return to it, will be always inferior to the other in perfection and felicity. The return of ſpirits to their firſt principle, reſembles the motion of bodies towards their centre; the nearer they approach to it the more their velocity augments, and conſequently thoſe who begin ſooner to return to their infinite centre will forever outſtrip the reſt in their courſe. This is the order eſtabliſhed by eternal Wiſdom, the immutable Law of diſtributive juſtice, from which God cannot deviate, without being eſſentially wanting to himſelf, countenancing rebellion, and expoſing all finite and fallible beings to the danger of diſturbing univerſal harmony. You ſee in all this the conduct of a God, of a Creator who drew ſpirits out of nothing to make them happy, he puniſhes them that they may return into order, he ſuſpends the exerciſe of his abſolute power, that by the

ſecret ſprings of an immutable wiſdom, goodneſs and juſtice, he may make them accompliſh freely his eternal purpoſes.

I comprehend you, ſaid Cyrus, God could not deprive us of liberty without depriving us of intelligence; nor hinder us from being fallible without making us infinite, nor prevent our wandring without deſtroying our liberty, nor diſpenſe us from expiatory pains without violating his juſtice and goodneſs: Exempt from all paſſions, he has neither anger nor revenge, he chaſtiſes only to amend, he puniſhes only to cure, he permits ſin only that he may not violate our liberty, he is tender of that liberty only that he may make us merit, he exacts that merit only to augment our happineſs, he does not employ his almighty power to force us to be happy, becauſe he will give us the eternal pleaſure of contributing to our own happineſs by love, and by a love of pure choice; he does good for the love of good, without having any need of our ſervices, without gaining any thing by our virtues, or loſing any thing by our crimes. Such is the glory of the God of the Hebrews, of HIM WHO IS, of the independent and ſelf-ſufficient Being. No philoſopher ever preſented me before with a chain of principles and conſequences, thoughts and ſentiments ſo worthy of the eternal Nature, ſo conſolatory to man, and ſo conformable to reaſon.

This, continued Eleazar, is what even the understanding of man can suggest to render the ways of God intelligible: it is thus that we confound reason by reason itself; it is by these principles that our doctors silence the philosophers of the Gentiles, who blaspheme against the sovereign Wisdom, because of the evils and crimes which happen here below. But yet our religion does not consist in these speculations; it is not so much a philosophical system as a supernatural establishment; Daniel will instruct you in it; he is at this time the prophet of THE MOST HIGH: The Eternal often shews him futurity as present, and lends him his power to work prodigies; he is soon to return to Babylon, he will shew you the oracles contained in our sacred books, and teach you what are the purposes for which God intends you. It was in this manner that the Hebrew philosopher instructed Cyrus, vainly striving to fathom the unsearchable depths of divine wisdom; what was defective in his opinions, was set right by the more simple and sublime instructions of Daniel, who came back to Babylon a few days after.

It was the time fixed by the prophets for the recovery of Nabuchodonosor, his frenzy ceased and his reason was restored to him. Before he returned to his capital, he resolved to pay a public homage to the God of Israel in the same place where he had given the noto-

rious instance of his impiety. He ordered Daniel to assemble the princes, magistrates, governors of provinces, and all the nobles of Babylon, and to conduct them to the plains of Dura, where he had some years before erected the famous golden statue. Clothed with his imperial robe, he mounted upon an eminence, from whence he might be seen by all the people; he had no longer any thing fierce or savage in his look; notwithstanding the dreadful condition to which his sufferings had reduced him, his countenance had a serene and majestic air: he turned towards the East, took off his diadem, prostrated himself with his face to the earth, and pronounced three times the tremendous name of JEHOVAH. Having adored the ETERNAL for some time in a profound silence, he rose up and said: People of all nations assembled together, it was here that you formerly beheld the extravagant marks of my impious and abominable pride; it was here that I usurped the rights of the Divinity, and would force you to worship the work of mens hands: THE MOST HIGH to punish this excess of irreligion condemned me to eat grass with the beasts for seven whole years; the times are accomplished; I have lifted up my eyes to Heaven and acknowledged the power of the God of Israel; my reason and my understanding are restored to me. Your God, (continued he, turning towards Daniel)

is in truth the GOD OF GODS and KING OF KINGS. All the inhabitants of the earth are before him as nothing, and he does according to his will both in heaven and in earth; his wisdom is equal to his power, and all his ways are full of justice; those that walk in pride he is able to abase, and he raises again those whom he had humbled: O princes and people learn to render homage to his greatness! at these words the assembly sent up shouts of joy, and filled the air with acclamations in honour of the God of Israel. Nabuchodonosor was conducted back with pomp to his capital and resumed the government of his kingdom: he raised Daniel to the highest dignities, and the Hebrews were honoured with the first posts throughout all the provinces of his empire.

Some days after, Amytis presented Cyrus to Nabuchodonosor, who received the young prince in a most friendly manner, and gave him a favourable audience: however, the nobles of Babylon, who sat in the king's council, represented in very strong terms, that it might be dangerous to provoke the Median court at the present juncture, when the forces of the kingdom were much lessened, and its treasure exhausted by the late troubles during the king's illness; and that it would be better policy to foment the divisions between the Medes and Persians, in order to make them mutually weaken each other, and so give the

king of Babylon a fair occasion of extending his conquests. But Nabuchodonosor, who by the misfortunes he had suffered was cured of all such false maxims, did not go into these ambitious projects of his ministers; and Cyrus observing his good dispositions, took that opportunity to lay before him the advantages he might find by an alliance with Cambyses; he made the king sensible that the Medes were the only rivals of his power in the East; that it could not be for his interest to let them grow more considerable, by subjecting and oppressing the Persians; but that he should rather make the latter his friends, who might serve as a barrier to his empire against the enterprizes of the Median prince; and lastly that Persia lay very convenient for the Babylonian troops to march through it into Media, in case Cyaxares should resolve upon a rupture. The prince of Persia spoke both in public and private assemblies with so much eloquence and strength of reason; he shewed during the course of his negotiation, which lasted some months, so much candour and truth; he managed the nobles with so much prudence and delicacy, that in the end he brought them all over: an alliance was sworn in a solemn manner, and Nabuchodonosor continued faithful to it the rest of his life.

Cyrus, impatient to see the sacred books of the Hebrews, which contained oracles relating

to his future greatneſs, converſed every day with Daniel; and the prophet gladly embraced the opportunity to inſtruct him in the Hebrew religion. He at length opened the books of Iſaiah, who had propheſied of Cyrus by name an hundred and fifty years before his birth, and the prince read there theſe words: 'Thus 'ſaith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus; 'whoſe right hand I have holden to ſubdue 'nations before him, and put kings to flight; 'and I will open before him the two-leaved 'gates, and the gates ſhall not be ſhut. I will 'go before thee, I will humble the great ones 'of the earth, I will break in pieces the gates 'of braſs, and cut in ſunder the bars of iron, 'and I will reveal to thee the hidden treaſures, 'and the ſecret of ſecrets †, that thou mayſt 'know that I the Lord who have called thee 'by thy name, am the God of Iſrael. For Ja-'cob my ſervant's ſake, and Iſrael mine elect, 'I have even called thee by thy name. I have 'ſurnamed thee, though thou haſt not known 'me. I am the Lord, and there is none elſe. 'there is no God beſides me.—I form the 'light and create darkneſs.—I have made 'the earth and created man upon it, I, even 'my hands, have ſtretched out the heavens, 'and all their hoſt have I commanded. I have 'raiſed him up in righteouſneſs, and I will di-

† *Arcana Secretorum. Iſaiah* xlv. 3. *vulg.*

'rect all his ways; he ſhall build my city, and 'he ſhall let go my captives, not for price nor 'reward, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.'

Cyrus was ſtruck with awe and reverence as well as aſtoniſhment, to ſee ſo clear and circumſtantial a prediction, a thing unknown in other nations; for there the oracles were always obſcure and ambiguous. Eleazar (ſaid he to the prophet) has already ſhewn me, that the great principles of your Theology concerning the three ſtates of the world agree with thoſe of other nations. He has removed all my difficulties about the origin of evil, by proving the freedom of intelligent natures: he ſhuts the mouth of impiety by his ſublime ideas concerning the pre-exiſtence of ſouls, their voluntary fall, and their total reſtoration: but he has ſaid nothing to me of the ſupernatural eſtabliſhment of your law. I conjure you, by the God whom you adore, to anſwer my queſtions: Has your tradition the ſame ſource with that of other nations? Has it been tranſmitted to you by a purer channel? Was your lawgiver a mere philoſopher, or a divine perſon?

I know, anſwered Daniel, the endeavours which our doctors uſe, to accommodate religion to the taſte of the philoſophers; but they are all bewildered and loſt in a croud of uncertain opinions: Who can find out the ways of God, or penetrate into his ſecret purpoſes? our

thoughts are weak, and our conjectures vain; the body, this earthly tabernacle, depreſſes the ſoul, and will not ſuffer it to reach thoſe heights to which it fondly aſpires. It is certain that God has permitted evil only that he might draw from it an infinite good; but how he will accompliſh his purpoſe is a ſecret hidden from the eyes of mortals. All the ſyſtems that can be imagined are either dangerous or defective. The curioſity of ſeeing into every thing, explaining every thing, and adjuſting it to our imperfect notions, is the moſt fatal diſeaſe of the human mind. The moſt ſublime act of our feeble reaſon is to keep itſelf ſilent before the ſovereign Reaſon; let us leave to God the care of juſtifying one day the incomprehenſible ways of his providence. Our pride and our impatience will not ſuffer us to wait for this unravelling; we would go before the light, and by ſo doing we loſe the uſe of it. † 'Wo unto him that ſtriveth with his 'Maker, unto him who is but clay and a pot-'ſherd of the earth.' Forget therefore all the refin'd ſpeculations of the philoſophers. I ſhall ſpeak to you a more ſure and ſimple language; I ſhall propoſe nothing to you but ſuch truths as are ſupported by the univerſal tradition of all nations, or elſe palpable facts, of which the eyes, ears, and all the ſenſes of men are judges.

† *Iſaiah* xlv.

The ETERNAL created our first parents in a state of innocence, happiness and immortality, but the ambitious desire of encreasing their knowledge, and of being as gods, carried them to disobey the orders of THE MOST HIGH: they were driven from their habitation of delights, and their whole race was involved in their punishment, as it had been in their crime; thus we were degraded in our origin, and blasted in our source. When mankind discontinued to be just, they ceased to be immortal; sufferings followed close upon crimes, and men were condemned to a state of pain and misery, in order to make them aspire perpetually after a better life. For the first ages after the fall, religion was not written; the moral part of it was found in reason itself, and the mysteries of it were transmitted by tradition from the antients. As men lived then several ages, it was easy to preserve that tradition in its purity. But the sublime knowledge of the first men having served only to make them the more criminal, the whole race of mankind, except the family of Noah, was destroyed, in order to stop the course of impiety and the increase of vice: the fountains of the great abyss were broken up, and the waters covered the earth with an universal deluge, of which there yet are some traces in the traditions of all nations, and of which we see every day convincing proofs, when we dig into the bowels of the

earth. The conſtitution of the world, which had ſuffered by the fall, was impaired anew *; the juices of the earth were impoveriſhed and ſpoilt by this inundation; the herbs and fruits had no longer the ſame virtue; the air loaded with an exceſſive moiſture ſtrengthened the principles of corruption, and the life of man was ſhortened. The deſcendants of Noah, who ſpread themſelves over the face of the whole earth, quickly forgot this terrible effect of the divine indignation; they corrupted their ways, and gave themſelves up to all wickedneſs. It was then that the ETERNAL reſolved to chooſe a peculiar people to be the depoſitary of religion, morality and all divine truths, that they might not be debaſed and entirely obſcured by the imagination, paſſions and vain reaſonings of men. The ſovereign Wiſdom choſe the moſt ſtupid and untractable people to be guardian of his oracles: the Aſſyrians, Chaldeans and Egyptians, who were eminent for ſubtilty of underſtanding and a ſuperior ſkill in all the ſciences, might have been ſuſpected of having mixed their own notions and reaſonings with the divine revelations; but the Hebrews, among whom you have found the ſublimeſt ideas of the Divinity, and of morality, have nothing in their natural genius which can make them ſuſpected of having invented theſe

* *See M. de Meaux univerſal hiſtory.*

truths. Abraham, by his faith and obedience, was found worthy to be the head and the father of this happy people. THE MOST HIGH promised him, that his posterity should be multiplied as the stars of heaven, that they should one day possess the land of Canaan, and that of his seed should come the DESIRE OF NATIONS in the fulness of time. The rising family of this Patriarch, feeble in its beginnings, went down to Egypt, where they became very numerous, awakened the jealousy of the Egyptians, and were reduced to a state of slavery; but having been tried and purified by all sorts of afflictions for the space of four hundred years, God raised up Moses to deliver them.

THE MOST HIGH, having first inspired our deliverer with the purest wisdom, lent him his almighty power to prove his divine mission by the most signal wonders; these wonders were nothing less than a frequent and instantaneous changing of the order and course of nature. The haughty king of Egypt refused to obey the orders of the ALMIGHTY. Moses terrified his court with repeated signs of the vengeance of Heaven: he stretched out his arm, and the whole kingdom felt its dreadful power; rivers were turned into blood: swarms of venomous insects spread every where diseases and death; prodigious lightnings with storms of hail destroyed men, beasts and plants; a thick darkness hid for three days all the luminaries

of heaven; and an exterminating angel deſtroyed in one night all the firſt-born of Egypt. At length the people of God left the land of their captivity, and Pharaoh purſued them with a formidable army. A pillar of fire was their guide by night, and a thick cloud by day concealed their march from the purſuers. Moſes ſpake, the ſea divided, the Iſraelites went through it on dry ground, and were no ſooner paſſed than the ſea returned to its ſtrength, and its impetuous waves ſwallowed up the infidel nation. Our fathers wandered in the deſert, where they ſuffered hunger, thirſt and the inclemency of the ſeaſons: they murmured againſt God: Moſes ſpake again, a miraculous flood deſcended from heaven; dry rocks became fountains of living water; the earth opened and ſwallowed up thoſe who refuſed to believe the promiſes, unleſs they might ſee their accompliſhment. It was in this deſert that God himſelf publiſhed his holy law, and dictated all the rites and ſtatutes of our religion. He called up our conductor to the top of mount Sinai; the mountain trembled, and the voice of the ETERNAL was heard in thunders and lightnings: He diſplayed his dreadful power to make an impreſſion upon hearts more diſpoſed to be affected by fear than love. But the GOD appeared no leſs in the wonders of his goodneſs, than in thoſe of his power. The high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity, and

whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, condescended to dwell in a visible manner amongst the children of Israel, and to direct them in all their ways. A moveable sanctuary, with the ark of the covenant, was formed and erected by his order, and the altar was sanctified by the presence of the glory of THE MOST HIGH. The rays of a heavenly light encompassed the tabernacle; and God sitting between the cherubim from thence declared his will. Moses by the command of God himself committed to writing our law and our history, the everlasting proofs of his supreme goodness, and of our ingratitude; a little before his death he put this book into the hands of all the people; it was necessary at every instant to consult it, in order to know not only the religious but civil laws; each Hebrew is obliged to read it over once a year, and to transcribe the whole at least once in his life. It was impossible to alter or corrupt these sacred annals, without the imposture's being discovered and punished as high treason against God, and an attempt against the civil authority.

Moses died; our fathers left the desert; nature was obedient to the voice of Joshua, their new conductor; rivers ran back to their fountain head; the sun stood still; the walls of a strong city fell down at the approach of the ark; and the most courageous and warlike nations fled before the triumphant armies of Is-

rael, who at length took poſſeſſion of the promiſed land. Miracles however do not change the heart, even when they convince the underſtanding. The ſtrongeſt conviction is too weak to controul the violence of the paſſions. Scarce was this ungrateful and inconſtant people ſettled in that land of delights, but they grew weary of being under the immediate government of JEHOVAH, and were deſirous of having a king to go before them like other nations. God gave them a king in his anger, and the Hebrew government became monarchical. Solomon, the wiſeſt and moſt pacific of our princes, erected a magnificent temple at Jeruſalem. The God of peace fixed his habitation upon mount Sion; the miracle of the ark was perpetuated, the glory of the divine Majeſty filled the ſanctuary, and oracles were given from the moſt holy place as often as the high prieſt went thither to enquire of the Lord. In order to perpetuate the memory of ſo many miracles, and to demonſtrate the truth of them to all future ages, Moſes, Joſhua, our judges and our kings eſtabliſhed ſolemn feſtivals and auguſt ceremonies: a numerous nation incredulous and rebellious, their kings, their prieſts, their tribes which were often divided among themſelves, concurred loudly, univerſally and ſucceſſively to give teſtimony to thoſe miracles by laſting monuments perpetuated from generation to generation. While the Iſraelites per-

ſevered in their obedience THE LORD OF HOSTS was their protector, and rendered them invincible as he had promiſed; but as ſoon as they departed from the law of their God he gave them up a prey to their fierce enemies; nevertheleſs he chaſtiſed them like a father, and did not utterly forſake them. In every age he raiſed up prophets to threaten, inſtruct and reform them. Theſe ſages being ſeparated from all terreſtrial pleaſures united themſelves to the ſovereign truth; the eyes of the ſoul, which have been ſhut ſince the origin of evil, were opened in theſe divine men to look into the counſels of providence, and to know its ſecrets. The heavy judgments of God fell often upon the ſtubborn and untractable Hebrews, and as often this choſen people were brought back by the prophets to own and adore the God of their fathers. At length they were wholly carried away by that wretched inclination in all mortals to corporalize the Deity, and to form to themſelves a god with paſſions like their own. The God of Abraham, faithful in his threatnings as in his promiſes, has humbled us for many years under the yoke of Nabuchodonoſor; Jeruſalem is become deſolate, and the holy temple an heap of ſtones; vagabonds and captives in a ſtrange land, we wander upon the banks of the Euphrates, and ſilently mourn when we remember Sion. But God having firſt raiſed up that proud conque-

ror to accomplish his eternal purposes, then abased him in his anger: You have been witness both of his punishment and of his deliverance; nevertheless the measure of the divine judgments upon the race of Abraham is not yet filled up; it is you, O Cyrus, who are ordained by THE MOST HIGH to be their deliverer; Jerusalem will be repeopled, the house of the Lord rebuilt, and the glory of the latter temple, which will one day be honoured with the presence of the Messiah, shall be greater than the glory of the former.

But what, said Cyrus, is the design of this law, dictated by God himself with so much pomp, preserved by your fore-fathers with so much care, renewed and confirmed by your prophets with so many miracles? In what does it differ from the religion of other nations? The design of the law and the prophets, replied Daniel, is to shew, that all creatures were pure in their original: that all men are at present born distempered, corrupt and ignorant even to the degree of not knowing their disease, and that human nature will one day be restored to its perfection. The miracles and prodigies, of which I have made you a recital, are, so to speak, but the play of wisdom to lead men into themselves, and make them attend to those three truths which they will find written in their own hearts, upon all nature, and in the whole plan of Providence.

The law of Moſes is but an unfolding of the law of nature; all its moral precepts are but means more or leſs remote, to carry us to what may ſtrengthen divine love in us, or to preſerve us from what may weaken it. The burnt-offerings, the purifications, the abſtinences, all the ceremonies of our worſhip are but ſymbols to repreſent the ſacrifice of the paſſions, and to ſhadow out the virtues neceſſary to re-eſtabliſh us in our primitive purity; thoſe who ſtop at the letter find expreſſions in our ſacred books that ſeem to humanize the Deity, promiſes that don't appear to have any relation to immortality, and ceremonies which they think unworthy of the ſovereign Reaſon: but the true ſage penetrates into their hidden meaning, and diſcovers myſteries in them of the higheſt wiſdom. The foundation of the whole law, and of all the prophecies is the doctrine of a nature pure in its original, corrupted by ſin, and to be one day reſtored. Theſe three fundamental truths are repreſented in our hiſtory under various images. The bondage of the Iſraelites in Egypt, their journey through the deſert and their arrival in the promiſed land, repreſent to us the fall of ſouls, their ſufferings in this mortal life, and their return to their heavenly country. The hidden meaning does not deſtroy the literal ſenſe, nor does the letter of the law exclude allegory: it is equally profane to deny the one, or to

deſpiſe the other. Theſe three principles, the traces of which are to be found in all religions, have been tranſmitted from age to age from the deluge to our time; Noah taught them to his children, whoſe poſterity ſpread them afterwards over all the earth; but in paſſing from mouth to mouth they have been altered and obſcured by the imagination of the poets, the ſuperſtition of the prieſts, and the different genius of each nation. We find more remarkable footſteps of them among the Orientals and Egyptians than any where elſe; becauſe Abraham †, our firſt patriarch, who was famous in Aſia, renewed them here, and becauſe the people of God were a long time in captivity on the banks of the Nile: but theſe ancient truths have been no where preſerved in their perfect purity, except in the oracles written by our lawgiver, our hiſtorians and our prophets.

But this is not all; there is a myſtery which is no where unfolded but in our religion, and of which I would not ſpeak to you, O Cyrus, if you were not the anointed of THE MOST HIGH, and his ſervant choſen for the deliverance of his people. The prophecies mention two advents of the Meſſiah, one in ſuffering,

† *See Joſ. Ant. lib.* 1. *cap.* 7. *et* 8. *Eupolem. apud Euſeb. et Voſſ. de Philoſoph. ſectis, cap.* 1. *p.* 3.

the other in glory. The GREAT EMANUEL will, many ages before his triumphant appearance in the clouds, live here upon earth in a ſtate of humiliation: he will expiate ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf before he reſtores the univerſe to its primitive ſplendor. The antient tradition from Noah concerning this grand ſacrifice was what ſuggeſted to all nations the firſt thought of offering victims to THE MOST HIGH as types of that perfect holocauſt: your prieſts having loſt theſe primitive ideas fooliſhly imagined that the friendſhip of the immortals was to be gained by ſhedding the blood of beaſts; but what relation is there between the divine goodneſs and the cruel immolation of harmleſs animals? without our traditions about the great Emanuel, the origin of your ſacrifices is a perfect aenigma.

Here Cyrus interrupted Daniel and ſaid: Who is this great Emanuel of whom you ſpeak? Is he the ſame with him whom the Perſians call Mythras, the Egyptians Orus, the Tyrians Adonis, the Greeks Jupiter the Conductor, Apollo and Hercules? What is his origin and what is his nature? The GREAT EMANUEL, anſwered the prophet, is he who is called the DESIRE OF NATIONS; he has been known to them by an ancient tradition, the ſource of which they are ignorant of, and which they have degraded by their fabulous names and impure images. The great Ema-

nuel is not, as ſome of your philoſophers ſay, a ſubordinate God, but equal in glory to the great Jehovah: He is not a Demi-God, but poſſeſſes in himſelf all the fulneſs of the Godhead: He is not a free production of the power of THE MOST HIGH, but a neceſſary emanation from his ſubſtance. All other beings, how exalted ſoever, whether angels or archangels, ſeraphim or cherubim were drawn out of nothing and may return to nothing again; but HE is a pure ſtream flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, the brightneſs of the everlaſting light, the unſpotted mirror of the majeſty of God, and the expreſs image of his goodneſs: He is of the ſame eſſence, he has the ſame attributes, but who can declare his generation? Let us not raſhly pry into thoſe impenetrable ſecrets; it is ſufficient to know, that THE DESIRE OF NATIONS will appear upon earth to bear our griefs, that he will be wounded for our tranſgreſſions and bruiſed for our iniquities.

But what neceſſity is there, cried out Cyrus, for this great ſacrifice? Has God any need of a bloody victim to appeaſe his wrath? Can the infinite Goodneſs require ſuch a cruel holocauſt? Beware of falling into the ſame error with which you reproach our prieſts. God has no need, replied Daniel, of an inhuman ſacrifice to pacify his vengeance, but he would countenance the rebellion of ſpirits and con-

tradict himself should he pardon the criminal without shewing his abhorrence of the crime, and display the whole extent of his goodness without asserting the prerogatives of his holiness. The divine Emanuel will leave the bosom of his Father, and remain long upon earth exiled from his presence; the living image of the majesty of God will take on him the form of a servant; the eternal WORD will become a mute babe, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; the brightness of the increated light will suffer an eclipse that will terrify the seraphim and cherubim; he will shew by his annihilation the homage that is due to the ETERNAL; by his humiliation the injustice of our pride; by his sufferings the necessity of our expiatory pains; and lastly, by his agony and the inexpressible anguish which our iniquities will cause him, the infinite aversion of THE MOST HIGH to the violation of order. 'Tis by this means that he will reconcile the justice of God with his mercy, repair the wrong done to his laws, and be at the same time both a sacrifice for sin and a model of all virtue. The history of his conflicts and triumphs will be for ever recorded in the registers of heaven, and give eternal testimony to the divine Wisdom, Goodness and Justice. I see from far that day which will be the consolation of the just and the joy of angels: All the heavenly powers will be present at this mystery, and a-

dore its depth; mortals will see nothing but the shell and the outside. Those Hebrews who expect only a triumphant Messiah will not comprehend this first advent; the pretenders to wisdom in all nations, who judge only by appearances, will blaspheme against what they understand not: nay, the most just among men will in this life see only as in a mystery the beauty, extent and necessity of that great sacrifice.

The prince of Persia was struck by this discourse and wavered in his thoughts; he perceived that all the discoveries made by Zoroaster, Hermes, Orpheus and Pythagoras were but imperfect traces and chance rays of the tradition from Noah: In Persia, Egypt, Greece and in all other nations he had found only obscure, uncertain and loose opinions; but with the Hebrews he had found books, prophecies and miracles, the authority of which was incontestable. Nevertheless, he saw the truth only as through a cloud, his heart was not yet touched; he waited for the accomplishment of Isaiah's prediction. Daniel was not ignorant of the fluctuation of his mind, and said to him: O Cyrus, religion is not a system of philosophical opinions, nor yet a history of miracles, or supernatural events, but a science that dilates the heart and fills it with godlike sentiments, a science which God reveals only to pure minds: to know the secrets

of religion, to feel its energy, a ſuperior power to man muſt deſcend into you, become abſolute maſter of you, and raviſh you from yourſelf: your heart will then feel thoſe truths which your underſtanding has now but a ſmall glimpſe of. The time for this is not yet come, but it approaches †; until that happy moment, be content with knowing that the God of Iſrael loves you, will go before you, and will accompliſh his will by you: this accompliſhment will be an invincible proof of the truth of all I have ſaid to you. Make haſte to verify his oracles, and return with ſpeed into Perſia, where your preſence is neceſſary.

The young hero ſoon after left Babylon; the year following Nabuchodonoſor died, and his ſucceſſors broke the alliance ſworn between the Aſſyrians and Perſians. Cyrus ſpent twenty whole years in war with the Aſſyrians and their allies: The ſeveral nations of the Eaſt obſerving his moderation in the midſt of triumphs, willingly ſubmitted to his empire, and the conqueſts made by his humanity were more numerous than thoſe of his ſword. Being ever as generous as invincible, he made no other uſe of victory than to render the vanquiſhed happy, and employed his power only to make juſtice flouriſh and to eſtabliſh and maintain the moſt excellent laws. The taking

† *Vid. Theodoret. de fide.*

of Babylon made him maſter of all the Eaſt from the river Indus to Greece, and from the Caſpian ſea to the extremities of Egypt. Seeing then the entire accompliſhment of Iſaiah's prediction, his heart became affected with the truths he had learned from Daniel; the miſt before his eyes was totally diſpelled, he openly avowed the God of Iſrael, and releaſed the Hebrews from their captivity by this ſolemn edict, which was publiſhed throughout the whole extent of his vaſt dominions. THUS SAITH CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA. THE LORD GOD OF HEAVEN HATH GIVEN ME ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE EARTH, AND HE HATH CHARGED ME TO BUILD HIM A HOUSE AT JERUSALEM WHICH IS IN JUDAH. WHOEVER AMONG YOU IS OF HIS PEOPLE, HIS GOD BE WITH HIM: AND LET HIM GO UP TO JERUSALEM AND BUILD THE HOUSE OF THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, HE IS THE GOD.

A

DISCOURSE

UPON THE

THEOLOGY AND MYTHOLOGY

OF THE

PAGANS.

MY first design was to insert some critical notes in the margin of the foregoing book; but as the attending to such remarks would have diverted the reader's mind too much from the principal subject, I thought it better to digest them into the form of a discourse, which I divide into two parts. In the first I shall shew, that the most celebrated philosophers of all ages and all countries have had the notion of a supreme Deity, who produced the world by his Power, and governs it by his Wisdom. From the second it will appear, that there are traces of the principal doctrines of revealed religion, with regard to the three states of the world, [illegible] in the Mythology of all nations

PART I.

Of the THEOLOGY of the PAGANS.

TO begin with the Magi or Perſian Philoſophers; According to the teſtimony of Herodotus*, the ancient Perſians had neither ſtatues, nor temples, nor altars: 'They think 'it ridiculous (ſays this author) to fancy, like 'the Greeks, that the gods have an human 'ſhape, or derive their original from men. 'They chooſe the higheſt mountains for the 'place of their ſacrifice: They uſe neither li'bations nor muſic, nor hallowed bread; but 'when any one has a mind to ſacrifice, he 'leads the victim into a clean place, and wear'ing a wreath of myrtle about his Tiara, 'invokes the god to whom he intends to of'fer it. The prieſt is not allowed to pray for 'his own private good, but for that of the na'tion in general; each particular member find'ing his benefit in the proſperity of the whole.

Strabo † gives the ſame account of the ancient Perſians. 'They neither erected ſtatues 'nor altars, ſays this hiſtorian; they ſacrificed

* *Herod. Clio. lib.* 1. *p.* 56. *Sect.* 131. *Edit. Francof.* 1608.

† *Strabo lib.* 15. *p.* 732. *Edit. Pariſ.* 1620.

'in a clean place and upon an eminence, where 'they offered up a victim crowned. When the 'prieſt had cut it into ſmall pieces, every one 'took his ſhare. They left no portion of it for 'the deities, ſaying, that God deſires nothing 'but the ſoul of the victim.' The Orientals, full of the notion of tranſmigration, imagined that the victim was animated by a criminal ſoul, whoſe expiatory pains were completed by the ſacrifice.

The Perſians indeed, as well as other Pagans, worſhipped the fire, the ſun and the ſtars: but we ſhall ſee that they conſidered them only as viſible images and ſymbols of a ſupreme God, whom they believed to be the ſovereign Lord of nature. Plutarch has left us in his treatiſe of Iſis and Oſiris, a fragment of the Theology of the Magi. This philoſophical hiſtorian aſſures us, that they called the great God, Oromazes, or the Principle of Light, that produced every thing, and worketh all in all*. They admitted however another god, but of an inferior nature and order, whom they called † Mythras or the middle god. They ſpeak of him ſometimes as a being coeternal with the ſupreme divinity, and at other times as the firſt production of his power‡.

* *Plut. de Iſid. et Oſir. Edit. Paris.* 1624. *p.* 370. † Μεσίτης Θεός.

‡ *See Cudworth's Intell. Syſtem, p.* 288.

The fineſt definition we have of the Deity among all the writings of the ancients, is that of Zoroaſter. It has been tranſmitted down to us by Euſebius in his *Praeparatio Evangelica*: an author ſo far from being over favourable to the Pagans, that he makes it his buſineſs continually to expoſe and degrade their philoſophy. And yet he ſays, that he had read theſe expreſs words in a book of Zoroaſter that was extant in his time, and known by the title of, The ſacred collection of Perſian monuments.

'† God is the firſt of all incorruptible be-
'ings, eternal and unbegotten: he is not com-
'pounded of parts: there is nothing equal to
'him, or like him. He is the author of all
'good, and entirely diſintereſted; the moſt ex-
'cellent of all excellent beings, and the wiſeſt
'of all intelligent natures; the father of equi-
'ty, the parent of good laws, ſelf-inſtructed,
'ſelf-ſufficient, and the firſt former of nature.'

The modern writers among the Arabians and Perſians, who have preſerved to us what remains of the ancient doctrine of Zoroaſter among the Guebri or worſhippers of fire, maintain, that the firſt Magi admitted only one eternal principle of all things. Abulfeda, cited by the famous Dr. Pocock, ſays, that according to the primitive doctrine of the Perſians‡,

† *Euſeb. Praep. Evang. lib.* 1. *p.* 42. *Edit. Paris.*

‡ *Pocock Specim. Hiſt. Arab. p.* 146.

'God was prior to both light and darkneſs, 'and had exiſted from all eternity in an ador- 'able ſolitude, without any companion or ri- 'val.' Sariſthani, quoted by Dr. Hyde, ſays, 'That the firſt Magi † did not look upon the 'good and evil principles as co-eternal; they 'thought that light was indeed eternal, but 'that darkneſs was produced in time by the 'diſloyalty of Ahriman, chief of the Genii.'

M. Bayle affirms in his dictionary, that the ancient Perſians were all Manicheans; but however he came to entertain this notion, he muſt certainly have given it up, if he had conſulted the original authors: a method which that famous critick did not always take. He had a genius capable of going to the bottom of any ſubject whatever; but he wrote ſometimes in a hurry, and treated ſuperficially the graveſt and moſt important ſubjects. Beſides, there is no clearing him from the charge of loving too much the diſmal obſcurity of ſcepticiſm; he is ever upon his guard againſt all ſatisfactory ideas in religion; he ſhews with art and ſubtilty all the dark ſides of a queſtion, but he very rarely repreſents it in that point of light which ſhines with evidence. What encomiums would he not have merited, had he employed his admirable talents more for the benefit of mankind?

† *Hyde Relig. Ant. Perſar. cap.* 9. *p.* 161. *et cap.* 22. *p.* 290.

Such was the Theology of the ancient Perſians, which in the foregoing work I have put in the mouth of Zoroaſter; and the Egyptians had much the ſame principles. There is nothing more abſurd than the notion generally given us of their Theology; nor is any thing more improbable than the allegorical ſenſe which certain authors fancy they have diſcovered in their hieroglyphicks. On one hand, it is hard to believe that human nature could ever ſink ſo low as to adore inſects, reptiles and plants (which they ſee produced, growing and dying every day) without aſcribing certain divine vertues to them, or conſidering them as ſymbols of ſome inviſible power. In the moſt barbarous countries we ſtill find ſome knowledge of a ſuperior Being, which is the object of the hope and fear of the moſt ſtupid ſavages. But though we ſhould ſuppoſe there are ſome nations in the world ſunk into ſo groſs an ignorance as to have no notion of a Deity, yet it is certain that Egypt cannot be charged with ſuch a degree of ſtupidity. All hiſtorians, as well ſacred as profane, agree in ſpeaking of this people as the wiſeſt of all nations; and one of the encomiums that the holy Spirit gives to Moſes, is, that he was learned in all the wiſdom of the Egyptians. Would the Holy Ghoſt ever have ſpoken in ſuch a manner of a nation ſo ſenſeleſs as to worſhip onions, crocodiles, and the moſt deſpicable reptiles?

On the other hand, there are certain modern writers who exalt the Theology of the Egyptians too high, and fancy that they find in their hieroglyphics all the myſteries of the Chriſtian religion. After the deluge, Noah doubtleſs would not leave his children ignorant of the great principles of religion, with regard to the three ſtates of mankind; and that tradition might have been ſpread from generation to generation over all the nations of the world: but we ſhould not infer from thence, that the Heathens had as clear notions of the divine Nature and the Meſſias, as the Jews had themſelves. Such a ſuppoſition, far from doing honour to Holy Writ, would only derogate from its dignity. I ſhall endeavour to keep the juſt medium between theſe two extremes.

Plutarch, in his treatiſe of Iſis and Oſiris, tells us † that the Theology of the Egyptians had two meanings; the one holy and ſymbolical, the other vulgar and literal; and conſequently that the figures of animals which they had in their temples, and which they ſeemed to adore, were only ſo many hieroglyphics to repreſent the divine attributes. Purſuant to this diſtinction, he ſays, that Oſiris ſignifies the active principle, or the moſt holy Being ‡; Iſis the wiſdom or rule of his operation, Orus the firſt production of his power, the model or

† *Plut. de Iſid. et Oſir. p.* 354.

‡ *Ibid. p.* 373, 374, 375.

plan by which he produced every thing, or the archetype of the world. We ſhall ſee hereafter whether it be reaſonable to think, that the Pagans had ever any knowledge of a trinity of diſtinct perſons in the indiviſible unity of the divine Nature. Thus much at leaſt is plain, that the Chaldeans and Egyptians believed all the attributes of the Deity might be reduced to three, power, underſtanding and love. In reality, whenever we diſengage ourſelves from matter, impoſe ſilence on the ſenſes and imagination, and raiſe our thoughts to the contemplation of the infinitely infinite Being, we find that the eternal Eſſence preſents itſelf to our mind under the three forms of power, wiſdom and goodneſs. Theſe three attributes comprehend the totality of his nature, and whatever we can conceive of him. Not to ſpeak therefore of the primitive traditions, which might poſſibly be the ſource of theſe three ideas concerning the divine Nature, it is nothing extraordinary, if the Egyptians and Orientals, who had very refining metaphyſical heads, ſhould of themſelves have diſcovered them. The Greeks and Romans were fonder of the ſciences which depend on ſenſe and imagination; and for this reaſon we find their Mythology ſeldom turns upon any thing but the external operations of the Deity in the productions of nature, whereas that of the former chiefly regards his internal operations and attributes.

By the help of these principles the Theology of the Pagans may be reduced to three principal Divinities, without doing violence to original authors, and without racking one's brain to digest their ideas, which are often very confused, into an intelligible system. They universally acknowledged one supreme God, whom they considered as the source of the Divinity, and the author of all beings; a goddess his wife, daughter or sister, whom they represented sometimes as the principle of the divine Fecundity, at other times as an emanation from his wisdom, and often as the companion and subject of his operations; and lastly, a subordinate God, the son and viceroy of the Supreme. And thus we find among the Persians the great Oromazes, the goddess Mythra, and the god Mythras; among the Egyptians Osiris, Isis and Orus; among the Greeks Jupiter, Minerva and Apollo.

In proportion as men departed from their primitive simplicity, and as imagination took the place of reason, the poets multiplied the names and images of these gods, and the three superior Divinities were lost in a crowd of inferior Deities. It is nevertheless certain, that the † philosophers always preserved those three ca-

† *See Huet. Dem. Evang. Jambl. de Myst. Egypt. p.* 150. *Plut. Isis. and Osir. p.* 327.

pital ideas. Socrates, Plato, Pythagoras, Porphyry, Jamblichus, Plutarch, Macrobius and all the philoſophical writers whoſe works have been tranſmitted to us, and who ſpeak of the gods of Egypt and Greece, aſſure us that Ptha, Amoun, Oſiris, Apis, Serapis and Anubis are the ſame; that Mars, Mercury, Apollo, Hercules, and Jupiter the Conductor, are alſo the ſame; that Cybele, Venus, Urania, Juno, Minerva, Phebe and Proſerpine are in like manner one and the ſame. Whence we may fairly conclude; without falling into chimerical conjectures, that Oromazes, Oſiris, Coelus, Saturn and Jupiter Olympius are different names to expreſs the one ſupreme God; that Mythra, Iſis, Cybele, Urania, Juno and Minerva denote the different attributes of the ſame goddeſs; and laſtly, that Mythras, Orus, Mercury, Apollo, Hercules, and Jupiter the Conductor, are the ſeveral titles of the middle god, univerſally acknowledged by the Pagans.

I know that the modern Materialiſts have endeavoured to reduce all the Pagan Divinities to one god and one goddeſs, which according to them, expreſs only the two principles of nature, whereof one is active, or the infinite force, the cauſe of all the motions we behold in the univerſe; the other paſſive, or the eternal mat-

Macrob. lib. 1. Saturn. Cudw. Intell. Syſtem, from page 484 to 494.

ter, which is the ſubject of all the forms produced by that moving force: this idea is by far poſterior to that of the Orientals, Egyptians and firſt Greeks, concerning the three forms of the divinity. It was neither received nor known, in the ſenſe of the Materialiſts, but by the diſciples of Epicurus, as we ſhall ſee hereafter.

This diſtinction of the gods into three claſſes, and that of the world into three ſtates, may be of great ſervice to clear up the confuſion of the antient Mythologies. I will venture to ſay, that neither Scaliger, nor Bochart, nor Graevius, nor Gronovius, nor M. Huet, could ſucceed in this enterprize, becauſe they were men of more learning than philoſophy. Grammarians, critics, and thoſe perſons of ſtrong memories, who employ themſelves wholly in the ſtudy of words and facts, are rarely remarkable for a nice examination of principles, and are not always capable of entring into the ſenſe of the philoſophers, or diſtinguiſhing the ſubtilty of their ideas. I confeſs indeed, that it is dangerous to be too much attached to ſyſtems, but yet without a ſyſtematical genius it is impoſſible to carry the ſciences to any great perfection.

To return to Plutarch. He concludes his treatiſe of Iſis and Oſiris in this manner †:

† *Page* 377, *and* 378.

'As he who reads the works of Plato may be 'said to read Plato, and he who acts the co-'medy of Menander may be said to act Me-'nander; so the ancients gave the name of 'gods to the various productions of the Deity.' Plutarch had said a little before, 'That care 'should be taken not to transform, dissolve and 'scatter the Divine Nature into rivers, winds, 'vegetables, or bodily forms and motions. 'This would be as ridiculous as to imagine, 'that the sails, the cables, the rigging and the 'anchor are the pilot; or that the thread, the 'woof, and the shuttle are the weaver. Such 'senseless notions are an indignity to the hea-'venly powers, whom they blaspheme whilst 'they give the name of gods to beings of an in-'sensible, inanimate and corruptible nature.' 'Nothing, as he goes on, that is without a 'soul, nothing that is material and to be per-'ceived by our senses, can be God. Nor yet 'must we imagine that there are different 'gods, according to the different countries of 'Greeks and Barbarians, Northern and Sou-'thern people. As the sun is common to all 'the world, though called by different names 'in different places; so there is but one sole 'supreme Mind or Reason, and one and the 'same Providence that governs the world, 'though he is worshipped under different 'names, and has appointed some inferior 'powers for his ministers.' Such, according

to Plutarch, was the doctrine of the first Egyptians with regard to the Divine Nature.

Origen, who was cotemporary with Plutarch, follows the same principles in his book against Celsus, a Pagan philosopher, who pretended to understand Christianity, because he knew some ceremonies of that religion, though he had never entered into the spirit of it. Now Origen expresses himself in this manner: '* The Egyptian philosophers have 'sublime notions with regard to the divine 'Nature, which they keep secret, and never 'discover to the people but under a vail of 'fables and allegories. Celsus is like a man 'who has travelled into that country; and 'though he has conversed with none but the 'ignorant vulgar, yet takes it into his head, 'that he understands the Egyptian religion. 'All the Eastern nations, the Persians, the Indians, the Syrians conceal secret mysteries 'under their religious fables. The wise men 'of all those religions see into the sense and 'true meaning of them, whilst the vulgar go 'no farther than the exterior symbol, and see 'only the bark that covers them.'

Let us next hear the testimony of Jamblichus, who had studied the religion of the Egyptians, and understood it throughly. He lived in the beginning of the third century,

* *Orig. contra Cels. lib.* 1, *p.* 11.

and was a disciple of the famous Porphyry. As both St. Clement † and St. Cyril of Alexandria § assure us, there were at that time a great many Egyptian books extant, which have been since lost: several of these were highly respected for their antiquity, and ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus, or one of his first disciples. Jamblichus had read these books, which had been translated by the Greeks; and this is the account that he gives of the Theology which they taught. 'According to the Egyptians, Eicton, or the first 'God, existed in his solitary unity before all 'beings ‖. He is the fountain and original of 'every thing that either has understanding or 'is to be understood. He is the first principle 'of all things, self-sufficient, incomprehensible; 'and the father of all essences.' Hermes says likewise, 'That this supreme god has constituted another god, called Emeph, to be head 'over all spirits, whether ethereal, empyrean, 'or celestial; and that this second god, whom 'he stiles the guide, is a wisdom that transforms and converts into itself all spiritual 'beings. He makes nothing superior to this 'god-guide, but only the first intelligent, and 'first intelligible, who ought to be adored in

† *Strom. l. 6. p. 133.* § *Contra Julian. lib. 1.* ‖ *Jambl. de Myst. Egypt. Ed. Lugd. 1552. p. 153, 154.*

'silence.' He adds, 'That the spirit which 'produceth all things has different names, 'according to his different properties and o-'perations; that he is called in the Egyptian 'language Amoun, as he is wise; Ptha, as he 'is the life of all things; and Osiris, as he is 'the author of all good.' Thus, according to Jamblichus, it is evident that the Egyptians admitted only one principle, and a middle god, like the Mythras of the Persians.

The notion of a spirit constituted by the supreme God, to be the head and guide of all spirits, is very ancient. The Hebrew doctors believed that the soul of the Messias was created from the beginning of the world, and appointed to preside over all the orders of intelligences. This opinion was founded on a notion, that finite natures cannot incessantly contemplate the brightness and glories of the divine Essence; and must necessarily sometimes turn off their view, and adore the Creator in his works; that at such times there must be an Head to lead spirits through all the regions of immensity, and shew them all its beauties and wonders.

To have a more perfect knowledge of the Theology of the Orientals and Egyptians, it may not be improper to examine that of the Greeks and Romans, which is derived originally from it. The philosophers of Greece went to study wisdom in Asia and Egypt.

Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, drew the beſt of their knowledge from thence. The traces of the Oriental tradition are now indeed in a manner worn out; but as there are ſeveral monuments of the Theology of the Greeks ſtill preſerved, we may judge of the maſters by their diſciples.

We muſt however diſtinguiſh between the gods of the poets and thoſe of the philoſophers. Poetry deifies all the various parts of nature, and gives ſpirit to bodies, as well as body to ſpirits: It expreſſes the operations and properties of matter by the actions and paſſions of ſuch inviſible powers, as the Pagans ſuppoſed to be directors of all the motions and events that we ſee in the univerſe. The poets paſs in a moment from allegory to the literal ſenſe, and from the literal ſenſe to allegory; from real Gods to fabulous deities; and this occaſions that jumble of their images, that abſurdity in their fictions, and that indecorum in their expreſſions, which are ſo juſtly condemned by the philoſophers. Notwithſtanding this multiplication of inferior deities, theſe poets however acknowledged, that there was but one only ſupreme God. This will appear from the very ancient traditions which we ſtill have of the philoſophy of Orpheus. I am very far from thinking that Orpheus was the author of thoſe works which go under his name: I believe with the famous

Grotius, that those books were wrote by the Pythagoreans, who professed themselves disciples of Orpheus: but whoever were the authors of these writings, it is certain that they are older than Herodotus and Plato, and were in great esteem among the Heathens; so that by the fragments of them still preserved, we may form a judgment of the ancient Theology of the Greeks. I shall begin with the abridgment which Timotheus the cosmographer gives us of the doctrine of Orpheus. This abridgment is preserved in Suidas*, Cedrenus † and Eusebius.

'There is one unknown Being exalted above and prior to all beings, the author of all things, even of the aether, and of every thing that is below the aether: This exalted being is Life, Light and Wisdom; which three names express only one and the same Power, which drew all beings, visible and invisible, out of nothing.' It appears by this passage that the doctrine of the creation, (or the production of substances) and that of the three forms of the Divinity were not unknown to the heathen philosophers: We shall soon find them in Plato.

Proclus has transmitted down to us this extraordinary passage of the Theology of

* *Suidas de Orph. p.* 350.

† *Cedrenus p.* 47.

Orpheus ‡. 'The univerſe was produced by 'Jupiter, the empyraeum, the deep Tartarus, 'the earth, and the ocean, the immortal gods 'and goddeſſes; all that is, all that has been, 'and all that ſhall be, was contained originally 'in the fruitful boſom of Jupiter. Jupiter is 'the firſt and the laſt, the beginning and the 'end. All beings derive their origin from 'him. He is the primitive Father and the 'immortal Virgin. He is the life, the cauſe, 'and the energy of all things. There is but 'one only Power, one only God, and one ſole 'univerſal King of all.' This paſſage ſeems to inſinuate, that the univerſe is a ſubſtantial emanation from the divine Eſſence, and not a meer effect of his power; however, this groſs error is no proof of Atheiſm in him who maintains it, as we ſhall ſee hereafter.

I ſhall conclude the Theology of Orpheus with a famous paſſage of the author of the Argonautica, who is looked upon to be a diſciple of his §. 'We will ſing firſt an hymn 'upon the ancient chaos; how the heavens, 'the ſea, and the earth were formed out of it. 'We will ſing likewiſe that eternal, wiſe, and 'ſelf-perfect love, which reduced this chaos

‡ *Proclus de Timaeo, p. 95.*

§ *Argon. apud Steph. p. 71. Edit. Fugger. An. 1566.*

'into order §.' It is clear enough from the doctrine of the theogony or birth of the gods, that the ancient poets aſcribed all to a firſt Being, who diſentangled the chaos. And it is for this reaſon that Ovid thus expreſſes himſelf in the firſt Book of his Metamorphoſes †. 'Before there was a ſea and an earth, before 'there was any heaven to cover the world, u'niverſal nature was but one indigeſted ſlug'giſh maſs, called a chaos. The ſeeds of all 'things jumbled together were in a perpetual 'diſcord, till a beneficent Deity put an end 'to the difference.' Words which ſhew plainly that the Latin poet, who followed the Greek tradition, makes a diſtinction between the chaos, and God, who by his wiſdom brought it out of confuſion into order. I ought however in this place to obſerve, that the Greek and Roman Mythology, in relation to the chaos, is much more imperfect than that of the Orientals and Egyptians, who tell us, that there was an happy and perfect ſtate of the world prior to the chaos: that the good Principle could never produce any thing evil; that his firſt work could not be confuſion and diſorder; and in a word, that phyſical evil is nothing elſe but a conſequence of moral evil.

§ *Ver.* 423. Προσφύτατόν τε, καὶ αὐτοτελῆ πολύμητιν Ἔρωτα.

† *Ovid. Metam. l.* 1. *p.* 1.

It was the imagination of the Greek poets that first brought forth the monstrous Manichean doctrine of two co-eternal principles; a supreme intelligence and a blind matter; light and darkness; an indigested chaos, and a Deity to reduce it into order.

Let any one read Homer and Virgil with a proper attention, and he will see, that notwithstanding the wild flights of their imagination, and the indecent allegories by which they sometimes dishonour the Divine Nature, the marvellous which runs through their fable is founded upon these three principles. 1. That there is one supreme God, whom they every where call the Father, and the sovereign Lord of gods and men, the Architect of the world, the Prince and Governor of the universe, the first God, and the great God. 2. That universal Nature is full of subordinate spirits, who are the ministers of that supreme God. 3. That good and evil, virtue and vice, knowledge and error, arise from the different influence and inspiration of the good and evil Genii, who dwell in the air, the sea, the earth, and the heavens.

The Tragic and Lyric poets express themselves after the same manner as the Epic poets. Euripides expressly acknowledges the dependence of all beings upon one sole Principle. 'O Father, and King of gods and men! says 'he, why do we miserable mortals fancy that

'we know any thing, or can do any thing? 'Our fate depends upon thy will †.

Sophocles repreſents the Deity to us as a ſovereign Intelligence, which is truth, wiſdom, and the eternal law of all ſpirits ‡. 'Tis not, ſays he, to any mortal nature, that laws owe their origin; they come from above; they come down from heaven itſelf; Jupiter Olympius is alone the father of them.

Plautus introduceth an inferior deity ſpeaking in this manner §: 'I am a citizen of the 'celeſtial city, of which Jupiter, the father of 'gods and men, is the head. He commands 'the nations, and ſends us over all kingdoms, 'to take an account of the conduct and actions, the piety and virtue of men. In vain 'do mortals endeavour to bribe him with their 'oblations and ſacrifices. They loſe their 'pains, for he abhors the worſhip of the impious.

'O muſe, ſays Horace, purſuant to the 'cuſtom of our anceſtors, celebrate firſt the 'great Jove, who rules over gods and men, 'the earth, the ſeas, and the whole univerſe: 'There is nothing greater than he, nothing 'that is like, nothing that is equal to him ‖.'

I ſhall conclude my quotations out of the

† *Eurip. Supplic. Act.* 3. *ver.* 734, *&c. Edit. Cant.* ‡ *In Oedip. Tyran.*

§ *Plaut. Rudens.* ‖ *B.* 1. *Ode* 12.

poets with a ſurpriſing paſſage of Lucan. When Cato, after croſſing the deſerts of Lybia, arrives at the temple of Jupiter Ammon, Labienus is for perſuading him to conſult the oracle. Upon which occaſion the poet puts this anſwer in the mouth of that philoſophical hero, '§ Why do you, Labienus, 'propoſe to me to aſk the oracle whether we 'ſhould chooſe to die in a ſtate of freedom 'with our ſwords in our hands, rather than 'ſee tyranny enſlave our country? Whether 'this mortal life be only a remora to a more 'laſting one? Whether violence can hurt a 'good man? Whether virtue does not make 'us ſuperior to misfortunes? And whether 'true glory depends upon ſucceſs? We know 'theſe things already, and the oracle cannot 'give us clearer anſwers than what God makes 'us feel every moment in the bottom of our 'heart. We are all united to the Deity. He 'has no need of words to convey his meaning 'to us; and he told us at our birth every 'thing that we have occaſion to know. He 'hath not choſen the parched ſands of Lybia 'to bury truth in thoſe deſerts, that it might 'be underſtood only by a ſmall number. He 'makes himſelf known to all the world, he 'fills all places, the earth, the ſea, the air, the 'heavens; he makes his particular abode in

§ *Lucan. lib. 9. ver. 566.*

'the ſoul of the juſt: Why then ſhould we 'ſeek him elſewhere?' In the foregoing paſſage I have omitted this expreſſion, *Jupiter eſt quodcunque vides*; not only becauſe in ſome manuſcripts we read *Jupiter eſt quocunque vides*, but alſo becauſe the poet by the word *quodcunque* confounds the viſible world with the ethereal matter, which the Stoicks and Orientals conſidered as the body of the Divinity: however he repreſents Cato as acknowledging a ſovereign Intelligence, which is all that I would prove.

Let us paſs from the poets to the philoſophers, and begin with Thales the Mileſian, chief of the Ionic ſchool*, who lived above ſix hundred years before the birth of Chriſt. We have none of his works now left; but we have ſome of his maxims, which have been tranſmitted down to us by the moſt venerable writers of antiquity. 'God is the moſt an-'cient of all beings; he is the author of the 'univerſe, which is full of wonders†; he is 'the Mind which brought the chaos out of 'confuſion into order‡; he is without be-'ginning and without ending, and nothing is 'hid from him§; nothing can reſiſt the force

* *Flor. Olym. L.* † *Diog. Laert. vita Thal. lib.* 1. ‡ *Cicer. de Nat. Deor. lib.* 1. *p.* 1113. *Edit. Amſt.* 1661. § *S. Clem. Alex. Strom. v.*

'of Fate; but this fate is nothing but the immutable reason and eternal power of Providence *.' What is still more surprising in Thales is his definition of the soul: he calls it 'a self-moving principle †, thereby to distinguish it from matter.'

Pythagoras ‡ is the second great philosopher after Thales, and chief of the Italic school. Every body knows the abstinence, silence, retirement and great purity of morals which he required of his disciples. He was very sensible that human understanding alone could never attain to the knowledge of divine things, unless the heart was purged of its passions. Now these are the notions which he has left us of the Deity. '§ God is neither 'the object of sense, nor subject to passion; 'but invisible, purely intelligible, and supremely intelligent. In his body he is like 'the light, and in his soul he resembles truth ‖. 'He is the universal Spirit that pervades and 'diffuseth itself over all nature. All beings receive their life from him **. There is but 'one only God, who is not as some are apt to 'imagine, seated above the world, beyond the

* *Stob. Ecl. Phys. cap.* 8. † *Plut. de Plat. Phil. lib.* 4. *c.* 2. *Stob. Ecl. Phys. cap.* 40.
‡ *Floruit Olymp. LX.* § *Plut. vita Numae et Diog. Laert. lib.* 12. ‖ *Vit. Pyth. Porphyr.* ** *Lact. Inst. lib.* 5.

'orb of the univerſe; but being all in himſelf, 'he ſees all the beings that inhabit his im-'menſity. He is the ſole Principle, the Light 'of heaven, the Father of all; he produces 'every thing, he orders and diſpoſes every 'thing; he is the reaſon, the life, and the 'motion of all beings *.'

He taught that beſides the firſt principle, there were three ſorts of intelligent beings, Gods, Heroes and Souls †. He conſidered the firſt as the unalterable images of the ſovereign Mind, human ſouls as the leaſt perfect of rea-ſonable ſubſtances, and heroes as a ſort of middle beings placed between the two others, in order to raiſe up ſouls to the divine union ‡. Thus he repreſents to us the divine Immenſity as containing innumerable worlds inhabited by ſpirits of different orders. And this is the true ſenſe of that famous expreſſion aſcribed to the Pythagoreans, that Unity was the principle of all things, and that from this Unity there ſprung an infinite duality. We are not by this duality to underſtand the two principles of the Manichees; but as ſome think the ſecond and third forms of the Orphean Trinity and triform Deity, or rather a world of intelligent and corporeal ſubſtances, which is the ef-

* *St. Juſt. Cohort. 1. ad Græc. p. 18.*

† *Diog. Laert. lib. 8.*

‡ *Hierocl. Com. in Carm. Aurea Pyth.*

ſect whereof unity is the cauſe*. This is the ſentiment of Porphyry, and it ought to be preferred before that of Plutarch, who is for aſcribing the Manichean ſyſtem to Pythagoras, without producing for it any proof.

Pythagoras agreed with Thales in defining the ſoul to be a ſelf-moving principle†. He maintained farther, 'That when it quits the 'body, it is re-united to the ſoul of the 'world‡; that it is not a god, but the work 'of an eternal God‖; and that it is immor-'tal on account of its principle§.' This philoſopher was of opinion that man was compoſed of three parts¶, a pure ſpirit, an aethereal matter, (which he called the ſubtile vehicle of the ſoul) and a mortal or groſs body. The old Greek poets had dreſſed up this opinion in a different guiſe; they called the ethereal body the repreſentation, the image or the ſhadow; becauſe they fancied that this ſubtile body, when it came down from heaven to animate the terreſtrial body, aſſumed its form juſt as melted metal takes that of the mold in which it is caſt. They ſaid that after death the ſpirit, ſtill cloathed with this ſubtile vehicle flew up to the regions of the moon, where they pla-

* *Porphyr. vita Pyth.* † *Plut. Plac. l.* 4. *cap.* 2. ‡ *Cicer. de Senec. c.* 21. ‖ *Ib. de Nat. Deor. l.* 2. § *Tuſc. lib.* 1. *p.* 1300. ¶ Πνεῦμα, Ψυχὴ, Σῶμα.

ced the Elysian fields. And there, as they imagined, a sort of second death ensued by the separation of the pure spirit from its vehicle: the one was united to the gods, the other staid in the abode of the shades. This is the reason why Ulysses says in the Odyssels, 'That he 'saw in the Elysian fields the divine Hercules, 'i. e. his image; for as for him, he is with 'the immortal gods, and assists at their ban-'quets*.' Pythagoras did not adopt the poetic fiction of a second death. He held, that the pure spirit, and its subtile vehicle being born together, were inseparable, and returned after death to the star from whence they descended. The Platonists and almost all the ancient philosophers had the same notion†. St. Paul, speaking of the resurrection, seems to favour this distinction of the celestial and the terrestrial body: 'But some man will say, how are the 'dead raised up? and with what body do they 'come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest 'is not that body which shall be, but bare 'grain.—So also is the resurrection of the dead, 'it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incor-

* *Odyss. lib.* 11. *p.* 167.

† *Plot. Enn.* 4. *l.* 3. *et Enn.* 6. *l.* 4. *Philopon. Prooem. in Arist. de Anim. Procl. Comm. in Tim. p.* 164. 290. *Hierocl. aurea Carm. p.* 293. *Suidas the word* Αὐγοειδὲς. *Cudworth Intellect. Syst. p.* 79.

'ruption; it is ſown in diſhonour, it is raiſed in 'glory; it is ſown in weakneſs, it is raiſed in 'power; it is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed 'a ſpiritual body. ——— Now this I ſay, bre-'thren, becauſe that fleſh and blood cannot in-'herit the kingdom of God.*' Hence it is, that ſome of the ancient fathers, as well as our modern divines†, have concluded, that the mortal and terreſtrial body, which is ever changing, and does not continue one moment the ſame, is ſomething merely accidental to our ſubſtance, and does not originally belong to it: a thick cruſt, a coarſe covering caſt over the celeſtial, ſpiritual, active and glorious body, which being unvailed and enlarged at the reſurrection, will appear in all its beauty; that this immortal ſeed, this incorruptible body, this hidden principle, which is perhaps at preſent the ſeat of the ſoul, will, for reaſons known to God only, remain buried after death in the common maſs of matter till the laſt manifeſtation of the divine power; and that then the face of the earth will be renewed by purifying flames, which will purge our globe of all that dark and earthly droſs which it has contracted. And this notion renders the doctrine of the reſurrection intelligible and philoſophical.

* 1 *Cor.* xv. *ver.* 35, 42, 50.

† *Dr. Clarke on the Being and Attributes of God, p.* 357, 358, 359.

I shall conclude the article of Pythagoras with a summary of his doctrine as it is given us by St. Cyril. 'We see plainly, says this father, that Pythagoras maintained, that there was but one God, the original and cause of all things, who enlightens every thing, animates every thing, and from whom every thing proceeds, who has given being to all things, and is the source of all motion*.'

After Pythagoras comes Anaxagoras † of the Ionic sect, born at Clazomene, and master to Pericles the Athenian hero. This philosopher was the first after Thales in the Ionic school who perceived the necessity of introducing a supreme intelligence for the formation of the universe. He rejected with contempt, and with great strength of reason refuted the doctrine of those who held, that § a blind necessity, and the casual motions of matter had produced the world. He endeavoured to prove, that a pure and uncompounded spirit presides over the universe.

According to Aristotle's account, the reasoning of Anaxagoras was founded upon these two principles: 1. 'That the idea of matter not including that of active force, motion could not be one of its properties. We must

* *St. Cyril. contra Julian. lib. 1, p. 35.*
† *Flor. Olymp.* LXXX.
§ *Plut. vita Pericl.*

'therefore, said he, seek somewhere else to find 'out the cause of its activity. Now this active 'principle, as it was the cause of motion, he 'called the soul, because it animates the uni-'verse*. 2. He distinguished between this uni-'versal principle of motion, and the thinking 'principle, which last he called the understand-'ing§. He saw nothing in matter that had 'any resemblance to this property; and from 'thence he inferred, that there was in nature 'another substance besides matter. But he ad-'ded, that the soul and spirit were one and the 'same substance distinguished by us only in re-'gard of its different operations; and that of 'all essences it was the most simple, the most 'pure, and the most exempt from all mixture 'and composition.' This philosopher passed at Athens for an atheist, because he denied that the stars and planets were gods†. He maintained, that the first were suns, and the latter habitable worlds; so very ancient is the system of a plurality of worlds, which has been generally thought to be modern.

Plato‖ condemns Anaxagoras for having explained all the phaenomena of nature by matter and motion. Descartes has only revived this opinion. I cannot but think it very

* *Arist. de anim. lib.* 1. *cap.* 2. *p.* 619. *Edit. Paris.* 1629. § *Ibid. p.* 620. † *Plat. de Legib.* 10. *p.* 886. ‖ *Plat. Phaed. p.* 73.

unjuſt to accuſe the philoſopher of Clazomene, or his follower of atheiſm, on this account, ſince they both lay it down for a principle, that motion is not a property of matter, and conſequently, that the moving force is altogether ſpiritual. It muſt nevertheleſs be allowed, that the French philoſopher is blameable in ſuppoſing that the viſible world is the neceſſary and unavoidable effect of a mere impulſion given to an indefinite matter. Hence it would follow, 1. That the laws of motion are not arbitrary and dependent on a ſovereign intelligence who acts with wiſdom and deſign; which totally deſtroys the idea of final cauſes. 2. That the world, ſuch as we ſee it, with all its irregularities, defects and diſorders, is preciſely in the ſame ſtate wherein it was at firſt produced by the Creator: theſe two principles were the fatal ſource of Spinoza's atheiſm: believing with Deſcartes, that matter and extenſion are the ſame thing, and that all the different phaenomena of nature are the effect of the neceſſary laws of motion, he preſently inferred, that immenſe extenſion and infinite force might be properties of the ſame eternal ſubſtance, which acts by the immutable laws of a blind neceſſity.

The moſt ſublime genius of our age, being ſenſible of theſe monſtrous abuſes of Carteſianiſm, reſolved to undermine the foundations of that philoſophy. He demonſtrated that the

primary laws of motion are purely arbitrary, and eſtabliſhed with knowledge and deſign by an intelligent Architect, in order to the preſervation of his work, and the accompliſhment of ſuch ends as are worthy of his wiſdom. It is with great injuſtice that this philoſopher has been accuſed of throwing us back into the occult qualities of the Peripatetics. I confeſs indeed that the obſcure and confuſed ideas which abound in the writings of ſome of his diſciples, have given too much occaſion to certain foreigners to reject the philoſophy of Sir Iſaac Newton, at the ſame time that they admire his geometry; but it is clear from his * firſt writings, that he never conſidered attraction as a cauſe, but only as an effect, and that he always ſuppoſed that this effect might be produced by impulſion†. Provided we reject the abſolute plenum of the Carteſians, their romantic elements, and their celeſtial vortices which are by no means geometrical, this incomparable philoſopher § admits that there may be a ſubtile

* *Vis centripeta eſt, qua corpora verſus punctum aliquid tanquam ad centrum undique trahuntur, impelluntur vel utcunque tendunt. Phil. Nat. Princ. p.* 2.

† *Quam ego attractionem appello, fieri ſane poteſt ut ea efficiatur impulſu, vel alio aliquo modo nobis ignoto. Opt. Ed. Lat. p.* 380.

§ *Phil. Nat. Princ. p. ult. Opt. p.* 350.

ſpirit, or ethereal matter diffuſed through all the immenſe ſpaces, to be the univerſal cauſe and ſpring of all the motions of the celeſtial and terreſtrial bodies; of elaſticity, electricity, coheſion, fluidity, vegetation and ſenſation; of the emiſſion, refraction and reflection of light, and even of attraction itſelf, which he looks upon as the immediate cauſe of the moſt part of natural effects; he would not however pretend to explain the laws of this ethereal fluid, for want of a ſufficient number of experiments to prove them. It was an eſſential principle with him, that natural philoſophy ſhould be founded upon experiments, and that theſe ſhould afterwards be applied to geometry, in order to gather from thence ſomething more to be depended upon than ingenious conjectures. His writings diſcover a wonderful ſagacity, penetration and depth, and all the marks of a ſolid underſtanding, which allows nothing to imagination in matters of reaſon; and though Deſcartes muſt be granted to have ſurpaſſed him in perſpicuity and method, he was unqueſtionably neither ſo profound nor ſo geometrical a genius, and gave a greater looſe to imagination.

Socrates * follows cloſe after Anaxagoras. The common notion is, that he was a martyr for the unity of the Godhead, in having refu-

* *Floruit Olym.* XC.

ſed to pay his homage to the gods of Greece; but it is a miſtake. In the apology that Plato makes for this philoſopher, Socrates acknowledgeth certain ſubordinate deities, and teaches, that the ſtars and the ſun are animated by intelligences who ought to be worſhipped with divine honours. The ſame Plato in his dialogue upon holineſs* tells us, that Socrates was not puniſhed for denying that there were inferior gods, but for declaiming openly againſt the poets who aſcribed human paſſions and enormous crimes to thoſe deities.

Socrates however, whilſt he ſuppoſed ſeveral inferior gods, admitted all the while but only one eternal principle. Xenophon has left us an excellent abridgment of the Theology of that philoſopher. 'Tis perhaps the moſt important piece we have of antiquity. It contains the converſation of Socrates with Ariſtodemus, who doubted of the exiſtence of God. Socrates makes him at firſt take notice of all the characters of deſign, of art, and of wiſdom that appear all over the univerſe, and particularly in the mechaniſm of the human body. '† Do you believe, ſays he then to Ariſtode-' mus, can you believe that you are the only 'intelligent being? You know that you poſ-

* *Plat. Eutyph. p. 5. et 6.*

† *Xen. Mem. Soc. Ed. Baſil. 1579. lib. 1. p. 573.*

'ſeſs but a little particle of that matter which
'compoſes the world, a ſmall portion of that
'water which moiſtens it, a ſpark of that flame
'which animates it. Is underſtanding peculiar
'to you alone? Have you ſo engroſſed and
'confined it to yourſelf, that it is to be found
'no where elſe? Does blind chance work e-
'very thing, and is there no ſuch thing as
'wiſdom beſides what you have?' Ariſtodemus having replied, that he did not ſee that wiſe Architect of the univerſe; Socrates anſwers him. 'Neither do you ſee the ſoul which go-
'verns your own body, and regulates all its
'motions. You might as well conclude, that
'you do nothing yourſelf with deſign and rea-
'ſon, as maintain that every thing is done by
'blind chance in the univerſe.' Ariſtodemus at length acknowledging a ſupreme Being, is ſtill in doubt as to providence; not being able to comprehend how the Deity can ſee every thing at once. Socrates replies, 'If the ſpirit
'that reſides in your body moves and diſpoſes
'it at its pleaſure, why ſhould not that ſove-
'reign Wiſdom which preſides over the uni-
'verſe, be able likewiſe to regulate, and order
'every thing as it pleaſes? If your eye can
'ſee objects at the diſtance of ſeveral furlongs;
'why ſhould not the eye of God be able to ſee
'every thing at once? If your ſoul can think
'at the ſame time upon what is at Athens, in
'Egypt, and in Sicily; why ſhould not the di-

'vine Mind be able to take care of every thing, 'being every where preſent to his work?' Socrates perceiving at laſt that the infidelity of Ariſtodemus did not ariſe ſo much from his reaſon as from his heart, concludes with theſe words; 'O Ariſtodemus, apply yourſelf ſincerely to worſhip God; he will enlighten 'you, and all your doubts will ſoon be removed!'

Plato, a diſciple of Socrates, follows the ſame principles. He lived about the hundredth Olympiad, at a time when the doctrine of Democritus had made a great progreſs at Athens. The deſign of all his Theology is to give us noble ſentiments of the Deity, to ſhew us that ſouls were condemned to animate mortal bodies, only in order to expiate faults they had committed in a pre-exiſtent ſtate; and in fine, to teach that religion is the only way to reſtore us to our firſt glory and perfection. He deſpiſes all the tenets of the Athenian ſuperſtition, and endeavours to purge religion of them. The chief object of this philoſopher is man in his immortal capacity: he ſpeaks of him in his politic one, only to ſhew that the ſhorteſt way to immortality is to diſcharge all the duties of civil and ſocial life for the pure love of virtue.

Plato in the beginning of his Timæus diſtinguiſhes between being which is eternally,

and being which has been made*. And in another of his dialogues he defines God the efficient cauſe which makes things exiſt that had no being before †: a definition which ſhews that he had an idea of creation. Nor is it at all ſurprizing that he ſhould have this idea, ſince it implies no contradiction. In reality, when God creates, he does not draw a being out of nothing, as out of a ſubject upon which he works; but he makes ſomething exiſt which did not exiſt before. The idea of infinite power neceſſarily ſuppoſes that of a being able to produce new ſubſtances, as well as new forms. To make a ſubſtance exiſt which did not exiſt before, has nothing in it more inconceivable than the making a form exiſt which was not before; for in both caſes there is a new reality produced; and whatever difficulties there are in conceiving the paſſage from nothing to being, they are as puzzling in the one as in the other. As therefore it cannot be denied but that there is a moving power, though we do not conceive how it acts; ſo neither muſt we deny that there

* Τί τὸ ὂν μὲν αἰεὶ, γένεσιν δὲ οὐκ ἔχον· καὶ τί τὸ γιγνόμενον μὲν, ὂν δὲ οὐδέποτε.

† Ποιητικὴν πᾶσαν ἔφαμεν εἶναι δύναμιν ἥ τις ἂν αἰτία γίγνηται τοῖς μὴ πρότερον οὖσιν ὕστερον γίγνεσθαι. *Plat. Sophiſt. pag.* 185. *Ed. Franc.* 1602.

is a creating power, because we have not a clear idea of it.

To return to Plato. He first considers the Deity in his eternal solitude before the production of finite beings. He says frequently like the Egyptians, 'That this first source of Deity 'is surrounded with thick darkness, which no 'mortal can penetrate, and that this inaccessible God is to be adored only by silence.' 'Tis this first Principle which he calls in several places the Being, the Unity, and the supreme Good*; the same in the intelligent world, that the sun is in the visible world. He afterwards represents to us this first Being as sallying out of his Unity to consider all the various manners by which he might represent himself exteriorly; and thus the ideal world, comprehending the ideas of all things, and the truths which result thence, was formed in the divine Understanding. Plato always distinguishes between the supreme Good, and that wisdom which is only an emanation from him. 'That 'which presents truth to the mind, says he, 'and that which gives us reason is the supreme 'Good. He is the cause and source of truth ‡. 'He hath begotten it like himself. As the

* *De Repub. lib. 6. p. 686.*

‡ *De Repub. lib. 6. p. 687.* Τοῦτον τοίνυν φῶμεν με λέγειν τὸν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἔκγονον ὃν τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐγέννησεν ἀνάλογον ἑαυτῷ.

'light is not the sun, but an emanation from 'it; so truth is not the first principle, but his 'emanation.' And this is what he calls the Wisdom, or the Logos. And lastly, he considers the first Mover displaying his power to form real beings, resembling those archetypal ideas. He stiles him * 'The Energy, or so-'vereign Architect who created the universe 'and the gods, and who does whatsoever he 'pleases in heaven, on the earth, and in the 'shades below.' He calls him likewise, 'Psyche, 'or the soul which presides over the world ra-'ther than the soul of the world;' to denote that this soul does not make a part of the universe, but animates it, and gives it all its forms and movements. Sometimes he considers the three divine attributes as three causes, at other times as three beings, and often as three gods: but he affirms that they are all but one sole Divinity; that there is no essential difference between them; that the second is the image of the first, and the third of the second; that they are not three suns, but one: and that they differ only as the light, its rays, and the reflection of those rays †.

* *Plat. de Repub. lib.* 10. *p.* 749. Δημιουργὸς *and not* δημιουργούμενον ψυχὴ ὑπερκόσμιος, *and not* ἐγκόσμιος.

† *See Cudworth Intellect. Syst. from p.* 580. *to p.* 590.

In other places, and especially in the Timaeus Locrus*, Plato speaks of three other principles, which he calls Ἰδέα, Ὕλη, Αἰσθητός: by the first he understands the archetypal ideas contained in the divine Intellect: by the second, a primary matter, incorruptible, eternal, uniform, without figure or division, but capable of receiving all forms and motions: by the third, the visible universe, bounded, corruptible, consisting of various parts; and this he stiles the sun, the effect and the work of the idea as the primitive father, and of the Ὕλη as the universal mother of whatever exists. We ought never to confound these three principles of nature with the three forms of the Divinity, which he calls Agathos, Logos and Psyche: the sovereign Good, which is the principle of Deity, the Intellect which drew the plan of the world, and the Energy which executed it.

Though we should suppose that Plato considered the Logos and the Psyche, the Intellect and the Energy, not only as two attributes, but as two hypostases, or emanations from the divine Substance, it would not follow that the Christians took their doctrine of the Trinity from him. He might owe this idea to the ancient traditions transmitted from the infant world, whence the Orientals, Chaldeans, Egyptians and Greeks originally drew their

* *Tim. Loc. p.* 1089.

foundeſt notions in divinity. The philoſophers of all nations ſeem to have had ſome idea, more or leſs confuſed, of a certain triplicity in the ſupreme Unity †. Chriſtianity has only unfolded this ancient doctrine. It teaches us that in the divine Eſſence there is a triple diſtinction of Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that the actions of the one are not the actions of the other; that the Father exiſts of himſelf, independently, as the primitive ſource of Deity; that the Son comes forth from the Father by an incomprehenſible generation; and the Holy Spirit from both by an inconceivable proceſſion; and laſtly, that theſe two emanations from the Divinity are neceſſary, co-eternal, con-ſubſtantial, infinite, and in all things equal to the Father, his independance only excepted. The church has been pleaſed to expreſs this diſtinction by the word Perſons; to denote that this trinity is not a mere diviſion of attributes, as the Sabellians hold; nor yet three different ſubſtances, as the Tritheiſts maintain. We have not a ſufficiently clear idea of the Eternal Nature to be able to deny, but it may admit of ſuch a diſtinction. As to finite beings indeed, the only diſtinction we know in them, is that of modes and ſubſtances; but is this a reaſon to deny the poſſibility of another in the infinite

† *Plot. Enn. v. l. 1. See Cudworth's Intell. Syſt. from pag. 570 to pag. 630.*

Essence? Ignorance may be a reason for doubting, but never for denying.

In order to silence the incredulous, and make this mystery intelligible to them, a famous * doctor of the church of England, and, as I am assured, the greatest philosopher † of modern times, believed that it would do no prejudice to the faith to consider the three Persons of the Trinity as three individual Agents, or three distinct Beings, though of the same substance. This opinion is as far above Arianism, as Arianism is above Socinianism. Fausto-Socini maintained that the Son had never any existence before the Incarnation. Arius held, that he was created or produced out of nothing like finite beings, but yet from all eternity, that is, before all time. The learned Dr. Clarke maintains every where, that the Word is not a creature, but an emanation from the Father, co-eternal and con-substantial; that this emanation is as essential to the Deity as his veracity; that it is not possible for the Father to be without the Son, in any other sense than it is possible for God to lie ‡; and consequently that the Word is not a precarious being which God may annihilate.

I will not pretend to justify any inconside-

* *Dr. Clarke.* † *Sir Isaac Newton.*

‡ *Observations on Dr. Waterland's Queries, p. 75.*

rate expreſſions which may have dropt from the doctor; we find ſuch in the fathers themſelves: but charity, which thinks no evil, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, will never inſiſt upon the literal import of unguarded words, which are diſavowed. It muſt nevertheleſs be granted that this doctrine, which is aſcribed originally to Sir Iſaac Newton, explains nothing, and only plunges us in new difficulties greater than the firſt. There may eaſily be many diſtinct beings, of the ſame diviſible and finite ſubſtance; but it is impoſſible to conceive three diſtinct beings of the infinite and indiviſible ſubſtance, without deſtroying his nature, and diſcerping the living and true God. Is it not better contentedly to join with all Chriſtian antiquity, in ſaying, that there is a triple diſtinction, real, but incomprehenſible in the Divinity, than to diſturb the peace of the church with defining the metaphyſical nature of this diſtinction, by ſuch ideas as lead to Tritheiſm, contrary to the intention of thoſe who advance them? How eaſy are the moſt extenſive genius's led aſtray, when they ſhake off the yoke of authority to give themſelves up to their ſpeculations? But to proceed.

Ariſtotle, Plato's diſciple, and prince of the Peripatetic philoſophers, calls God †: "The

† *Ariſt. Ed. Pariſ.* 1629. *Metaph. lib.* xiv. *cap.* 7. *p.* 1002.

'eternal and living Being, the moſt noble of 'all beings, a ſubſtance entirely diſtinct from 'matter, without extenſion, without diviſion, 'without parts, and without ſucceſſion; who 'underſtands every thing by one ſingle act, 'and continuing himſelf immoveable, gives 'motion to all things, and enjoys in himſelf 'a perfect happineſs, as knowing and con-'templating himſelf with infinite pleaſure.' In his Metaphyſics he lays it down for a principle, ‡ 'That God is a ſupreme Intelligence 'which acts with order, proportion and de-'ſign; and is the ſource of all that is good, ex-'cellent and juſt.' In his treatiſe of the Soul, he ſays, § 'That the ſupreme Mind is by its 'nature prior to all beings, that he has a ſo-'vereign dominion over all.' And in other places he ſays, ‖ 'That the firſt Principle is 'neither the fire, nor the earth, nor the wa-'ter, nor any thing that is the object of ſenſe; 'but that a ſpiritual Subſtance is the cauſe of 'the univerſe, and the ſource of all the order 'and all the beauties, as well as of all the mo-'tions and all the forms which we ſo much 'admire in it.' Theſe paſſages ſhew, that though Ariſtotle held matter to be eternal, he nevertheleſs conſidered it as a production of

‡ *Metaph. lib.* xiv. *cap.* 10. *p.* 1005.

§ *Id. de Anim. lib.* i. *cap.* 7. *p.* 628.

‖ *Metaph. lib.* i. *cap.* 2. *et* 3. *p.* 844, 845.

the divine Intellect, and posterior in nature to it. He supposed the eternity of this production, because he could not conceive how the divine Mind, being all act, and all energy, could ever be in a state of inactivity. Besides this first and eternal Substance, he acknowledges several other intelligent beings that preside over the motions of the celestial spheres. 'There is, says he, but one only Mover, and 'several inferior deities. * All that is added 'about the human shape of these deities, is no-'thing else but fiction, invented on purpose 'to instruct the common people, and engage 'them to an observance of good laws. All 'must be reduced to one only primitive sub-'stance, and to several inferior substances, 'which govern in subordination to the first. 'This is the genuine doctrine of the ancients, 'which has happily escaped from the wreck 'of truth, amidst the rocks of vulgar errors 'and poetic fables.'

Cicero lived in an age when corruption of manners and scepticism were at their height. The sect of Epicurus had got the ascendant at Rome over that of Pythagoras; and some of the greatest men, when they were reasoning about the divine Nature, thought fit to suspend their judgment, and waver between the two opinions of a supreme Intelligence

* *Met. lib.* xiv. *cap.* 8. *p.* 1003.

and a blind matter. Cicero, in his treatise of the nature of the gods, pleads the cause of the Academic philosophers who doubted of every thing. It is however to be observed, that he refutes Epicurus with great force of reason in his first book, and that the objections which he makes in his third, as an Academic, are much weaker than the proofs which he draws from the wonders that appear in nature, which he insists on in his second book, to demonstrate the existence of a supreme Intelligence.

In his other works, and particularly in his book of laws, he describes the universe to us † 'as a republic, of which Jupiter is the prince 'and common father. The great law imprinted in the hearts of all men is to love the 'public good, and the members of the common society as themselves. This love of 'order is supreme justice, and this justice is 'amiable for its own sake. To love it only 'for the advantages it produces us, may be 'politic, but there is little of goodness in it. 'Tis the highest injustice to love justice only 'for the sake of recompence. In a word, the 'universal, immutable and eternal law of all 'intelligent beings, is to promote the happiness of one another like children of the same 'father.' He next represents God to us as a

† *Cic. de. Leg. Ed. Amst.* 1661. *lib.* i. *p.* 1188,—1191, *&c.*

sovereign Wisdom, from whose authority it is still more impracticable for intelligent natures to withdraw themselves than it is for corporeal ones*. 'According to the opinion 'of the wisest and greatest men, says this philosopher, the law is not an invention of human understanding, or the arbitrary constitution of men, but flows from the eternal 'reason that governs the universe. The rape 'which Tarquin committed upon Lucretia, 'continues he, was not less criminal in its nature, because there was not at that time any 'written law at Rome against such sort of violences. The tyrant was guilty of a breach 'of the eternal law, the obligation whereof 'did not commence from the time it was 'written, but from the moment it was made. 'Now its origin is as ancient as the divine Intellect: for the true, the primitive, and the 'supreme law is nothing else but the sovereign 'reason of the great Jove. This law, says he 'in another place†, is universal, eternal, immutable. It does not vary according to 'times and places. It is not different now 'from what it was formerly. The same immortal law is a rule to all nations, because it 'has no author but the one only God who

* *Cic. de leg. lib. 2. p. 1194.* † *Frag. of the Repub. of Cicero preserved by Lactantius. lib. vi. c. 8.*

'brought it forth and promulged it.' Such were the reasonings of Cicero when he consulted natural light, and was not carried away by a fondness of shewing his wit in defending the doctrine of the Sceptics.

To come at last to Seneca the Stoic. He was Nero's tutor, and lived in an age when Christianity was not in credit enough to engage the heathens to borrow any philosophical principles from thence. '* 'Tis of very little 'consequence, says he, by what name you 'call the first Nature, and the divine Reason 'that presides over the universe, and fills all 'the parts of it. He is still the same God. He 'is called Jupiter Stator, not as historians 'say, because he stopped the Roman armies 'as they were flying, but because he is the 'constant support of all beings. They may 'call him Fate, because he is the first cause on 'which all others depend. We Stoics call him 'sometimes Father Bacchus, because he is the 'universal life that animates nature; Hercules, because his power is invincible: Mercury, because he is the eternal Reason, Order and Wisdom. You may give him as 'many names as you please, provided you allow but one sole Principle every where present.'

* *Senec. Edit. Ant. a Lipsio* 1632. *de Benef. lib.* iv. *p.* 311.

Agreeably to Plato's notions, he conſiders the divine Underſtanding as comprehending in itſelf the model of all things, which he ſtyles the immutable and almighty ideas*. 'Every workman, ſays he, hath a model by 'which he forms his work. It ſignifies no-'thing whether this model exiſts outwardly 'and before his eyes, or be formed within 'him by the ſtrength of his own genius; ſo 'God produces within himſelf that perfect 'model, which is the proportion, the order 'and the beauty of all beings. † The ancients, 'ſays he in another place, did not think Jove 'ſuch a being as we repreſent him in the Ca-'pitol, and in our other buildings. But by 'Jove they meant the guardian and governor 'of the univerſe, the underſtanding and the 'mind, the maſter and the architect of this 'great machine. All names belong to him. 'You are not in the wrong if you call him 'Fate, for he is the cauſe of cauſes, and every 'thing depends on him. Would you call him 'Providence; you fall into no miſtake, it is 'by his wiſdom that this world is governed. 'Would you call him Nature: you will not 'offend in doing ſo, it is from him that all 'beings derive their origin, it is by him that 'they live and breathe.'

* *Senec. Epiſt. 65. p. 493.*

† *Ibid. Natur. quaeſt. lib. 2. p. 715.*

There is no reading the works of Epictetus, of Arrian his disciple, and of Marcus Antoninus without admiration. We find in them rules of morality worthy of Christianity; and yet those disciples of Zeno believed like their master, that there was but one Substance, that the supreme intelligent Being was material, and that his Essence was a pure aether which filled all by local diffusion; that whatever was not extended was nothing; and in short, that infinite extension was the same with the divine immensity. * The Platonists represented to them, that it was a gross imagination to suppose that every thing, which is, exists by local diffusion; that were it so, the divine Essence would not be equally present every where; that there would be more of it in a great space than in a little one; that it is absurd to conceive that which is nothing but power, wisdom and goodness, under the form of length, breadth and thickness; that all other beings exist in God, but that he exists only in himself; that immense space is not the divine Immensity, as time everlasting is not the divine Eternity; that the Immensity of God is the manner of his existing in himself without extension of parts, as his Eternity is the manner of his existing in himself with-

* *Plat. Tim. et de leg. lib.* x. *Arist. de anim. lib.* i. *cap.* 3. *Porphyr. p.* 230.

out ſucceſſion of thoughts; that ſpace is but the manner wherein bodies exiſt in him, as time is but the manner in which finite beings exiſt with him; that the one meaſures the bounds of the parts, and the other the variation of the modes; that we ſhould have no idea of local extenſion, if there were no bodies, as we ſhould have no idea of ſucceſſive duration if there were no changes; and laſtly, that indefinite unbounded extenſion is not immenſe in all ſenſes, as it is not infinite in all reſpects: but that God is immenſe in all ſenſes, as he is in all reſpects infinite.

It was thus that the Pagan philoſophers talked of the divine Immenſity before the riſe of ſcholaſtic theology. The obſcurity of our reaſonings on this matter proceeds from our want of a clear idea of ſubſtances: we neither know nor diſtinguiſh them but by their properties; otherwiſe we ſhould ſee that the ſupreme Unity may exiſt every where without extenſion of parts, as he exiſts for ever without ſucceſſion of thoughts; that he is all in all places, as he beholds all beings with one glance. The reaſon of our not having a clear idea of the divine Immenſity, is our not having an adequate idea of infinity; we aſcribe to him certain properties, becauſe we ſee that they are contained in the idea we have of him; but we are obliged at the ſame time, in order to avoid abſurdities, to give him

other attributes which we do not comprehend. Thus in geometry we admit the infinite diviſibility of matter, and the doctrine of aſymptotes which follows from it, without having a clear idea of either of them.

But after all, the materialiſm of the Stoics does not evince that they were Atheiſts: a falſe notion about the Deity being far from proving that they believed none at all. What conſtitutes an Atheiſt, is not the maintaining with the Orientals, that matter is an expanſion of the divine ſubſtance; nor with the Stoics, that the infinite Eſſence is a pure aether; nor with the Platoniſts, that the univerſe is an eternal production of the Deity; but real Atheiſm conſiſts in denying that there is a ſupreme Intelligence, who made the world by his power, and governs it by his wiſdom.

For our fuller ſatisfaction, with regard to the theology of the heathens, let us ſee what the fathers of the church thought of it. They had ſufficient opportunities of knowing it thoroughly, by the frequent diſputes which they held with them. As this is a matter of a very nice nature, it may be dangerous to indulge any thing to one's own conjectures; let us have recourſe to wiſe antiquity. Arnobius † introduces the heathens complaining of the injuſtice of the Chriſtians. ' 'Tis a mere ca-

† *Arnob. lib.* i. *p.* 19.

'lumny, say those heathens, to charge us with 'such a crime, as the denying of a supreme 'God. We call him Jove, the supremely great 'and sovereignly good; we dedicate our most 'magnificent structures and our capitols to 'him, to shew that we exalt him above all o-'ther deities. † St. Peter in his preaching at 'Athens, says St. Clement of Alexandria ‡, in-'sinuates that the Greeks had a knowledge of 'the Deity. He supposes that those people 'adore the same God as we do, though not in 'the same manner. He does not forbid us 'to adore the same God as the Greeks, but 'he forbids us to adore him after the same 'way. He orders us to change the manner, 'and not the object of our worship.' 'The 'heathens, says Lactantius §, who admit se-'veral gods, say nevertheless that those su-'bordinate deities, though they preside over 'all the various parts of the universe, do it in 'such a manner, as that there is still but one 'sole Ruler and supreme Governor. From 'whence it follows, that all other invisible 'powers are not properly gods, but ministers 'or deputies of the one great and almighty 'God, who appointed them executors of his

† *An apocryphal book which then passed under the name of St. Peter's.* ‡ *Strom. l. vi. p. 635.*

§ *Lib. i. p. 16.*

'will and pleasure.' Eusebius of Cesarea goes farther. '* The heathens own that there 'is but one only God, who fills, pervades and 'presides over universal nature; but they 'maintain, that as he is present to his work 'only in an incorporeal and invisible manner, 'they are therefore in the right to worship 'him in his visible and corporeal effects.' I shall conclude with a famous passage of St. Austin, who reduces the Polytheism of the heathens to the unity of one sole Principle. '† Jupiter, says this father, is, according to 'the philosophers, the soul of the world, who 'takes different names according to the dif-'ferent effects which he produces. In the e-'thereal spaces he is called Jupiter, in the air 'Juno, in the sea Neptune, in the earth Pluto, 'in hell Proserpina, in the element of fire 'Vulcan, in the sun Phoebus, in divination 'Apollo, in war Mars, in the vintage Bacchus, 'in the harvest Ceres, in the forests Diana, 'and in the sciences Minerva. All that crowd 'of gods and goddesses are only the same Ju-'piter, whose different powers and attributes 'are expressed by different names.' It is therefore evident by the testimony of profane poets, heathen philosophers, and fathers of the church, that the Pagans acknowledged one sole

* *Praep. Evang. l.* iii. *cap.* 13. *p.* 105.
† *S. Aug. de Civ. Dei, l.* iv. *c.* 11.

ſupreme Deity. The Orientals, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, and all nations agreed univerſally in teaching this truth.

About the fiftieth Olympiad, ſix hundred years before the Chriſtian æra, the Greeks having loſt the traditional knowledge of the Orientals, began to lay aſide the doctrine of the ancients, and to reaſon about the divine Nature from prejudices, which their ſenſes and imagination ſuggeſted. 1. Anaximander lived at that time, and was the firſt who ſet himſelf to deſtroy the belief of a ſupreme Intelligence, in order to account for every thing by the action of blind matter, which by neceſſity aſſumes all ſorts of forms. He was followed by Leucippus, Democritus, Epicurus, Strato, Lucretius, and all the ſchool of the Atomical philoſophers. 2. Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Socrates, Plato, Ariſtotle, and all the great men of Greece oppoſed this impious doctrine, and endeavoured to re-eſtabliſh the ancient Theology of the Orientals. Theſe philoſophers of a ſuperior genius obſerving in nature motion, thought and deſign, and the idea of matter including none of theſe three properties; they inferred from thence, that there was in nature another ſubſtance beſides matter. Greece being thus divided into two ſects, they diſputed for a long time, without either party being convinced. 3. At length about the 120th Olympiad, Pyrrho formed a third ſect, whoſe great

principle was to doubt of every thing, and determine nothing. All the Atomiſts, who had laboured in vain to find out a demonſtration of their falſe principles, preſently ſtruck in with the Pyrrhonian ſect. They ran wildly into an univerſal doubting, and carried it almoſt to ſuch an exceſs of frenzy, that they doubted of the cleareſt and moſt palpable truths. They maintained without any allegory, that every thing we ſee is only an illuſion, and that the whole ſeries of life is but a perpetual dream, of which thoſe of the night are only ſo many images. 4. At laſt Zeno ſet up a fourth ſchool about the 130th Olympiad. This philoſopher endeavoured to reconcile the diſciples of Democritus with thoſe of Plato, by maintaining that the firſt principle was indeed an infinite Wiſdom, but that his eſſence was only a pure aether, or a ſubtile light, which diffuſed itſelf every where, to give life, motion and reaſon to all beings.

It is plain then that there were four ſorts of philoſophers among the ancients; the Atheiſts or Atomiſts, the Spiritualiſts or Theiſts, the Materialiſts or Stoics, the Pyrrhonians or Academics. In theſe laſt ages the modern Free-thinkers have only revived the ancient errors, diſguiſing them under new terms.

1. Jordano Bruno, Vannini, and Spinoza have vamped up the monſtrous ſyſtem of Anaximander; and have added only ſome artful

distinctions to impose upon weak minds. Spinoza, perceiving clearly that thought could not be an effect of matter, endeavoured to prevent all objections against the Materialists, by maintaining, that * extension and thought are properties of the same substance; that the ideas of objects are really nothing different from the objects themselves †; that extension and matter are the same ‡; that infinite space is the immensity of God, as infinite time is his eternity §; and consequently that all essences are but different forms of the same substance ‖. It must nevertheless be granted, that his Atheism does not consist in these errors, since they have all been maintained by philosophers who had a sincere abhorrence of impiety. Spinoza's Atheism lyes wholly in this, that he makes the one only Substance, for which he contends, to act without knowledge or design. 2. Descartes, Malebranche, Poiret, Leibnitz, Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. Bentley, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Cheyne, and several philosophers of a genius equally subtile and profound, have endeavoured to refute these errors, and brought arguments to support the ancient theology. Be-

* *Locke of Hum. Under. p.* 456. † *Berkeley's Dialogues.* ‡ *Descartes and Malebranche.* § *Dr. Clarke's Letters to Leibnitz, p.* 77, 119. ‖ *The Orientals and Semicabalistical writers.*

ſides the proofs which are drawn from the effects, they have inſiſted on others drawn from the idea of the Firſt Cauſe. They ſhew plainly, that the reaſons for believing are infinitely ſtronger than thoſe for doubting: and that it is abſurd to deny what we ſee clearly, becauſe we do not ſee farther. 3. Mr. Hobbes, and ſome philoſophers of more faith, Behmen, and ſeveral cabaliſtical writers, have revived the errors of the Stoics, and pretend that extenſion is the baſis of all ſubſtances; that the ſoul differs from the body only as being more ſubtilized; that a ſpirit is but a rarified body, and a body a condenſed ſpirit; and laſtly, that the infinite Being, though indiviſible, is extended by local diffuſion. 4. To conclude, there are ſome ſuperficial minds, who not being able to look upon truth with a ſteady view, nor to weigh the degrees of evidence, nor to compare the force of proofs with that of objections, perſuade themſelves that the mind of man is not formed for the knowledge of truth, run headlong into an univerſal doubting, and fall at length into a ſenſeleſs kind of Pyrrhoniſm, called Egomiſm, where every one fancies himſelf to be the only being that exiſts. The hiſtory of former times is like that of our own; Human underſtanding takes almoſt the ſame forms in different ages, and loſes its way in the ſame labyrinths; there are periodical diſeaſes of the mind as well as of the body.

PART II.

Of the MYTHOLOGY of the PAGANS.

MEN, left to the light of their reaſon alone, have always looked upon moral and phyſical evil as a ſhocking phaenomenon in the work of a Being infinitely wiſe, good and powerful. To account for it, the philoſophers have had recourſe to ſeveral hypotheſes. Reaſon told them all, that what is ſupremely good could never produce any thing that was wicked or miſerable. From hence they concluded, that ſouls are not now what they were at firſt; that they are degraded, for ſome fault committed by them in a former ſtate; that this life is a ſtate of exile and expiation; and in a word, that all beings are to be reſtored to their proper order. Tradition ſtruck in with reaſon, and this tradition had ſpread over all nations certain opinions which they held in common, with regard to the three ſtates of the world, as I ſhall ſhew in this ſecond part, which will be a ſort of abridgment of the traditional doctrine of the ancients.

I begin with the Mythology of the Greeks and Romans. All the poets, ſpeaking of the golden age, or reign of Saturn, deſcribe it to us

as an happy ſtate, in which there were neither calamities, nor crimes, nor labour, nor pains, nor diſeaſes, nor death*. They repreſent, on the contrary, the iron age, as the time when phyſical and moral evil firſt appeared; then it was that vices, ſufferings, and all manner of evils came forth of Pandora's box, and overflowed the face of the earth †. They ſpeak to us of the golden age renewed, as of a time when Aſtraea was to return upon earth; when juſtice, peace and innocence were to flouriſh again with their original luſtre; and when every thing was to be reſtored to its primitive perfection ‡. In a word, they ſing on all occaſions the exploits of a ſon of Jupiter, who was to quit his heavenly abode and live among men. They give him different names, according to his different functions; ſometimes he is Apollo fighting againſt Python and the Titans; ſometimes he is Hercules, deſtroying monſters and giants, and purging the earth of their enormities and crimes; one while he is Mercury, or the meſſenger of Jove, flying about every where to

* *See Heſiod. de ſaecul. aureo, Orpheus apud Proclum. Theol. Plat. lib. 5. cap. 10. Lucret. lib. 5. Ovid. Metam. lib. 1. fab. 3. Virg. Georg. lib. 2. lin. 336.*

† *Ovid. Met. lib. 1. fab. 4, 5, et 6. Virg. Georg. lib. 1. lin. 126. Juv. Satir. 6.*

‡ *Virg. Ecl. 4. Senec, Trag. Oedip. Act. 2.*

execute his degrees; and another while he is Perſeus, delivering Andromeda or human nature, from the monſter that roſe out of the great deep to devour her. He is always ſome ſon of Jupiter, giving battles, and gaining victories. I will not inſiſt upon theſe poetical deſcriptions, becauſe they may perhaps be looked upon as mere fictions, and a machinery introduced to embelliſh a poem, and amuſe the mind. Allegorical explications are liable to uncertainty and miſtake: ſo that I ſhall go on directly to repreſent the doctrine of the philoſophers, particularly that of Plato, which is the ſource from whence Plotinus, Proclus, and the Platoniſts of the third century drew their principal notions.

To begin with the dialogue of Phaedo, or of immortality, and give a ſhort analyſis of it: Phaedo gives his friend an account of the condition in which he ſaw Socrates at the time of his death. 'He quitted life, ſays he, with a 'ſerene joy, and a noble intrepidity.' His friends aſking him the reaſon of it, 'I hope, 'ſays Socrates in his anſwer, to be re-united 'to the good and perfect gods, and to be aſſo-'ciated with better men than thoſe I leave up-'on earth †.' When Cebes objects to him that the ſoul vaniſhes after death like a ſmoke, and is entirely annihilated, Socrates ſets himſelf to

† *P.* 48, 51.

refute that opinion, and endeavours to prove that the ſoul had a real exiſtence † in an happy ſtate, before it informed an human body. This doctrine he aſcribes to Orpheus ‡. 'The diſciples of Orpheus, ſays he, called the body a 'priſon, becauſe the ſoul is here in a ſtate of 'puniſhment till it has expiated the faults that 'it committed in heaven. Souls, continues 'Plato, that are too much given to bodily pleaſures, and are in a manner beſotted, wander 'upon the earth, and are put into new bodies §; 'for all ſenſuality and paſſion cauſe the ſoul to 'have a ſtronger attachment to the body, 'make her fancy that ſhe is of the ſame nature, 'and render her in a manner corporeal; ſo 'that ſhe contracts an incapacity of flying a'way into another life. Being oppreſſed with 'the weight of her impurity and corruption, 'ſhe ſinks again into matter, and becomes 'thereby diſabled to remount towards the re'gions of purity, and attain to a re-union with 'her Principle.

Upon this foundation is built the doctrine of the tranſmigration of ſouls, which Plato repreſents in the ſecond Timæus as an allegory, and at other times as a thing real, where ſouls that have made themſelves unworthy of the ſupreme Beatitude, ſojourn and ſuffer ſuc-

† *P.* 57. ‡ *Plat. Cratyl. p.* 276.
§ *Phaed. p.* 61, 62, 63.

ceſſively in the bodies of different animals, till at laſt they are purged of their crimes, by the pains they undergo. This hath made ſome philoſophers believe that the ſouls of beaſts are degraded ſpirits. A very ancient doctrine, and common to all the Aſiatics, from whom Pythagoras and Plato derived it; but the poets had much debaſed it by their fictions. They ſuppoſed that there was an univerſal and eternal metempſychoſis; that all ſpirits were ſubject to it, without ever arriving at any fixed ſtate. The philoſophers, on the contrary, believed that none but depraved ſouls were deſtined to ſuch a tranſmigration, and that it would one day be at an end, when they were purified from their crimes †.

The Pythagoreans and Platoniſts not being able to perſuade themſelves that the brutes were abſolutely inſenſible of pleaſure and pain, or that matter was capable of ſenſation and conſciouſneſs, or that the Divine Juſtice could inflict ſufferings on intelligences that had never offended, thought the doctrine of tranſmigration leſs abſurd than that of mere machines, material ſouls, or pure intelligences, formed only to animate the bodies of beaſts.

The firſt of theſe opinions is altogether contrary to experience; and though we may by general and ingenious hypotheſes throw a miſt

† *See Cudw. Intel. Syſtem. p.* 314.

before our eyes, yet whenever we examine nicely into all the appearances of ſenſation diſcernible in beaſts we can never ſeriouſly doubt of it. I do not ſay the appearances of reflection, but of ſenſation; I am not unaware that in our own bodies we have frequent motions of which we are not conſcious, and which nevertheleſs ſeem to be the effects of the moſt exact and geometrical reaſoning. I ſpeak therefore of the marks of pleaſure and pain which we obſerve in the brutes; and I think that we can have no pretence to reject ſuch evidence, unleſs it be that we don't feel what happens to them; but then, for the ſame reaſon, we might believe, that all other men are machines. The ſecond opinion, which is that of material ſouls, held by the Peripatetics, tends to deſtroy all the proofs of the immateriality of our ſpirits. If matter be capable of ſenſation, it may likewiſe be capable of reflecting upon its own ſenſations, and the Materialiſts will gain their point. The third opinion deſtroys all our ſoundeſt notions of the Deity, by ſuppoſing that God can create beings which ſhall be immediately unhappy, without any previous demerit on their part, degrade pure intelligences without any reaſon, and when they have for a while acted in mortal bodies a part much below the dignity of their nature, reduce them again to nothing.

I will venture to ſay, that the doctrine of tranſmigration is leſs repugnant not only to

reaſon and experience, but likewiſe to religion, than either of the other three. We ſee in the ‡ ſacred oracles that impure ſpirits may deſire ſometimes to enter into the bodies of the vileſt animals. After all, a true philoſopher will be prudently ſceptical, with regard to all uncertain conjectures. The only uſe which I would make of what has been above advanced, is to ſhew the incredulous that they ſay nothing to the purpoſe againſt us, when they maintain that our ſouls die like thoſe of the brutes; and further, that the fictions of the ancients, how abſurd ſoever they at firſt appear, are often more defenſible than the ſyſtems of the moderns, which are ſo much admired for a depth of penetration.

To return to Plato. 'Pure ſouls,' adds he in his Phaedo, 'that have exerted themſelves 'here below to get the better of all corruption, 'and free themſelves from the impurities of 'their terreſtrial priſon, retire after death into 'an inviſible place, unknown to us, where the 'pure unites with the pure, the good cleaves 'to its like, and our immortal eſſence is united 'to the divine.' He calls this place the firſt earth, where ſouls made their abode before their degradation. 'The earth, ſays he, is im-'menſe; we know and we inhabit only a ſmall 'corner of it §. That ethereal earth, the an-

‡ *St. Luke, chap.* viii. § *P.* 81.

'cient abode of ſouls, is placed in the pure re-
'gions of heaven, where the ſtars are ſeated.
'We that live in this low abyſs are apt enough
'to fancy that we are in an high place, and we
'call the air the heavens: juſt like a man that
'from the bottom of the ſea ſhould view the
'ſun and ſtars through the water, and fancy
'the ocean to be the firmament itſelf. But if
'we had wings to mount on high, we ſhould
'ſee that THERE is the true heaven, the true
'light, and the true earth. As in the ſea every
'thing is altered, and disfigured by the ſalts
'that abound in it; ſo in our preſent earth e-
'very thing is deformed, corrupted, and in a
'ruinous condition, if compared with the pri-
'mitive earth.' Plato gives afterwards a pom-
pous deſcription of that ethereal earth, of which
ours is only a broken cruſt. He ſays ‡, 'that
'every thing there was beautiful, harmonious
'and tranſparent; fruits of an exquiſite taſte
'grew there naturally; and it was watered with
'rivers of nectar. They there breathed the
'light, as we here breathe the air, and they
'drank waters which were purer than air it-
'ſelf.' This notion of Plato agrees in a
great meaſure with that of Deſcartes, about the
nature of the planets; this modern philoſopher
was of opinion that they were at firſt ſuns, which
contracted afterwards a thick and opaque cruſt.

‡ *P.* 82.

This same doctrine of Plato is likewise clearly explained in his Timaeus *. There he tells us how Solon in his travels discourſed with an Egyptian prieſt about the antiquity of the world, its origin, and the revolutions which had happened in it according to the Mythology of the Greeks. Upon which the Egyptian prieſt ſays to him. 'O Solon, you Greeks are 'always children, and you never come to an 'age of maturity; your underſtanding is young, 'and has no true knowledge of antiquity. 'There have been upon earth ſeveral deluges 'and conflagrations, cauſed by changes in the 'motion of the heavenly bodies. Your hiſto-'ry of Phaeton, whatever air it has of a fable, 'is nevertheleſs not without a real foundation. 'We Egyptians have preſerved the memory of 'theſe facts in our monuments and temples; 'whereas it is but a very little while that the 'Greeks have had any knowledge of letters, 'of the muſes and of the ſciences.' This diſcourſe puts Timaeus upon explaining to Socrates the origin of things, and the primitive ſtate of the world †. 'Whatever has been produced, 'ſays he, has been produced by ſome cauſe. 'Tis no eaſy matter to know the nature of 'this Maker, and Father of the univerſe; and 'though you ſhould diſcover it, it would be im-'poſſible for you to make the vulgar compre-

* *Tim. p.* 1043. † *P.* 1047.

'hend it. This Architect of the world, continues he, had a model by which he produced 'every thing, and this model is himself. As 'he is good, and what is good has not the least 'tincture of envy, he made all things as far as 'was possible like Himself. He made the world 'perfect in the whole of its constitution, perfect too in all the various parts that compose 'it, which were subject neither to diseases, nor 'to decay of age. The Father of all things, '* beholding this beautiful image of himself, 'took a complacency in his work, and this complacency raised in him a desire of improving 'it to a nearer likeness to its model.'

In the dialogue which bears the title of Politicus, Plato mentioning this primitive state of the world, calls it the reign of Saturn, and describes it in this manner †. 'God was then 'the Prince and common Father of all; he governed the world by himself, as he governs it 'now by inferior Deities: rage and cruelty did 'not then prevail upon earth; war and sedition 'were not so much as known. God himself 'took care of the sustenance of mankind, and 'was their Guardian and Shepherd: There 'were no magistrates, nor civil polity as there 'are now. In those happy days men sprung 'out of the bosom of the earth, which produced them of itself, like flowers and trees.

* *P.* 1051. † *Pag.* 537, 538.

'The fertile fields yielded fruits and corn 'without the labour of tillage. Mankind ſtood 'in no need of raiment to cover their bodies, 'being troubled with no inclemency of the 'ſeaſons; and they took their reſt upon beds of 'turf of a perpetual verdure. Under the reign 'of Jupiter, Saturn, the maſter of the univerſe, 'having quitted as it were the reins of his em-'pire, hid himſelf in an inacceſſible retreat. 'The inferior gods who governed under him 'retired likewiſe; the very foundations of the 'world were ſhaken by motions contrary to its 'principle and its end, and it loſt its beauty 'and its luſtre. Then it was that good and e-'vil were blended together. But in the end, 'leſt the world ſhould be plunged in an eternal 'abyſs of confuſion, God, the Author of the 'primitive order, will appear again and reſume 'the reins of empire. Then he will change, 'amend, embelliſh and reſtore the whole frame 'of nature, and put an end to decay of age, to 'diſeaſes and death.'

In the dialogue under the title of Phaedrus, Plato more diſtinctly unfolds the ſecret cauſes of moral evil, which brought in phyſical evil. '‡ There are in every one of us, ſays he, two 'principal ſprings of action, the deſire of plea-'ſure, and the love of virtue, which are the 'wings of the ſoul. When theſe wings are

‡ *Pag.* 1216.

'parted, when the love of pleasure and the love 'of virtue carry us contrary ways, then souls 'fall down into mortal bodies.' Let us see here his notion of the pleasures which spirits taste in heaven, and of the manner how souls fell from the happy state which they enjoyed there. '* The great Jupiter, says he, animating his 'winged chariot, marches first, followed by all 'the inferior Gods and Genii; thus they tra-'verse the heavens, admiring the infinite won-'ders thereof. But when they go to the great 'banquet, they raise themselves to the top of 'heaven, and mount above the spheres. None 'of our poets ever yet sung, or can sing that 'super-celestial place †. It is there that souls 'contemplate with the eyes of the understand-'ing, the truly existing Essence, which has nei-'ther colour nor figure, nor is the object of any 'sense, but is purely intelligible. There they 'see virtue, truth and justice not as they are 'here below, but as they exist in him who is 'Being itself. There they satiate themselves 'with that sight till they are no longer able to 'bear the glory of it, and then they return 'back to heaven, where they feed again on 'nectar and ambrosia. Such is the life of the 'gods. Now, continues Plato ‡, every soul 'which follows God faithfully into that super-

* *Pag.* 1222. † Ὑπερουράνιος τόπος.
‡ *Pag.* 1223.

'celestial place, preserves itself pure and without blemish: but if it takes up with nectar 'and ambrosia, and does not attend on Jupiter's chariot, to go and contemplate truth, it 'grows heavy and sluggish, it breaks its wings, 'it falls upon the earth, and enters into a human body more or less vile, according as it 'has been more or less elevated. Souls less degraded than others dwell in the bodies of 'philosophers. The most despicable of all animate the bodies of tyrants and evil princes. Their condition alters after death, and 'becomes more or less happy according as 'they have loved virtue or vice in their lifetime. After ten thousand years souls will be 're-united to their origin. During that space 'of time their wings grow again and are renewed†.'

Such was the doctrine which Plato opposed to the profane sect of Democritus and Epicurus, who denied an eternal Providence on account of the physical and moral evil which they saw in the world. This philosopher gives us a fine description of the universe: he considers it as an immensity filled with free spirits, which inhabit and inform innumerable worlds.

† *This doctrine of Plato's, concerning the fall and restoration of souls, is explained by Macrobius in his commentary on Scipio's dream, chap.* ii. 12, 13.

Theſe ſpirits are qualified to enjoy a double felicity; the one conſiſting in the contemplation of the divine Eſſence, the other in admiring his works. When ſouls no longer make their felicity conſiſt in the knowledge of truth, and when lower pleaſures turn them off from the love of the ſupreme Eſſence, they are thrown down into ſome planet, there to undergo expiatory puniſhments till they are cured by their ſufferings. Theſe planets are conſequently, according to Plato's notion, like hoſpitals or * places inſtituted for the cure of diſtempered intelligences. Such is the inviolable law eſtabliſhed † for the preſervation of order in the celeſtial ſpheres. This double employment of the heavenly ſpirits is one of the ſublimeſt notions of Plato, and ſhews the wonderful depth of his genius. It was the ſyſtem adopted by the heathen philoſophers, whenever they attempted to explain to us the origin of evil; and thus they reaſon. If ſouls could without intermiſſion contemplate the divine Eſſence by a direct view, they would be impeccable, the ſight of the ſupreme Good neceſſarily engaging all the love of the will. To explain therefore the fall of ſpirits, they are forced to ſuppoſe an interval, when the ſoul withdraws from the divine Preſence, and quits the ſuper-celeſtial abode, in order to admire

* Νοσοκομεῖοι. † Θεσμὸς Ἀδραστίας.

the beauties of nature, and entertain herſelf with ambroſia, as a food leſs delicate, and more ſuitable to a finite being. It is in theſe intervals that ſhe becomes falſe to her duty.

Pythagoras had learned the ſame doctrine among the Egyptians. We have ſtill a very valuable monument of it left in the commentary of Hierocles upon the golden verſes aſcribed to that philoſopher ‡. 'As our alienation from God, ſays this author, and the loſs 'of the wings which uſed to raiſe us up to 'heavenly things, have thrown us down into 'this region of death, which is over-run with 'all manner of evils; ſo the ſtripping ourſelves 'of earthly affections, and the revival of virtues in us make our wings grow again, and 'raiſe us up to the manſions of life, where true 'good is to be found without any mixture of 'evil. The eſſence of man being in the middle 'between beings that contemplate God without ceaſing, and ſuch as are not able to contemplate him at all, he has it in his power to 'raiſe himſelf up towards the one, or ſink 'down towards the other †. The wicked man,' ſays Hierocles in another place, 'does not care 'that the ſoul ſhould be immortal, for fear he 'ſhould live after death only to ſuffer puniſhment. But the judges of the ſhades below, as

‡ *Hierocl. Comm. in aurea Carm. p.* 187. *Edit. Cant.* 1709. † *Ibid. Carm.* 120.

'they form their judgment upon the rules of 'truth, do not decree, that the soul should e-'xist no longer, but that it should be no longer 'vicious. Their business is to correct and cure 'it, by prescribing punishments for the health 'of nature, just as physicians heal the most in-'veterate ulcers by incisions. These judges 'punish the crime in order to extirpate vice. 'They do not annihilate the essence of the 'soul, but bring it back to its true and genuine 'existence, purifying it from all the passions 'that corrupt it. And therefore when we have 'sinned, we should be glad to embrace the pu-'nishment as the only remedy for vice.'

It is therefore evidently the doctrine of the most famous Greek philosophers, 1. That souls had a pre-existence in heaven. 2. That the Jupiter who marched at the head of souls before the loss of their wings, is distinct from the supreme Essence, and is very like the Mythras of the Persians, and the Orus of the Egyptians. 3. That souls lost their wings, and were thrust down into mortal bodies, because that instead of following Jupiter's chariot, they gave themselves too much up to the enjoyment of lower pleasures. 4. That at the end of a certain period of time, the wings of the soul shall grow again, and Saturn shall resume the reins of his empire in order to restore the universe to its original splendor.

Let us now examine the Egyptian Mytho-

logy, the ſource from whence that of the Greeks was derived. I ſhall not offer to maintain the myſtical explications that Kircher gives of the famous table of Iſis, and of the obeliſks that are to be ſeen at Rome: I confine myſelf to Plutarch, who has preſerved us an admirable monument of that Mythology. To repreſent it in its real beauties, it will be proper to give a ſhort and clear analyſis of his treatiſe of Iſis and Oſiris, which is a letter written to Clea, prieſteſs of Iſis. † 'The Egyptian 'Mythology, ſays Plutarch, has two ſenſes, 'the one ſacred and ſublime, the other ſenſible 'and palpable. 'Tis for this reaſon that the 'Egyptians put ſphinxes before the door of 'their temples; deſigning thereby to ſignify 'to us that their Theology contains the ſecrets of wiſdom under enigmatical words. 'This is alſo the ſenſe of the inſcription upon 'a ſtatue of Pallas or Iſis, at Sais, I AM ALL 'THAT IS, HAS BEEN, AND SHALL BE, AND 'NO MORTAL HAS EVER YET REMOVED 'THE VAIL THAT COVERS ME. ‡ He afterwards relates the Egyptian fable of Iſis and Oſiris. They were both born of Rhea and 'the Sun; whilſt they were ſtill in their mother's womb, they jointly ingendred the god 'Orus the living image of their ſubſtance. 'Typhon was not born, but burſt violently

† *Pag.* 354. ‡ *Pag.* 365.

'through the ribs of Rhea. He afterwards re-
'volted againſt Oſiris, filled the univerſe with
'his rage and violence, tore the body of his
'brother in pieces, mangled his limbs, and
'ſcattered them about. Ever ſince that time
'Iſis goes wandering about the earth to gather
'up the ſcattered limbs of her brother and huſ-
'band. The eternal and immortal ſoul of Oſi-
'ris led his ſon Orus to the ſhades below, where
'he gave him inſtructions how to fight, and
'vanquiſh Typhon. Orus returned upon earth,
'fought and defeated Typhon, but did not
'kill him; he only bound him and took away
'his power of doing miſchief. The wicked one
'made his eſcape afterwards, and was going to
'throw all again into diſorder: but Orus
'fought him in two bloody battles, and de-
'ſtroyed him entirely.' Plutarch goes on thus; '‡ Whoever applieth theſe allegories to
'the divine Nature, ever bleſſed and immor-
'tal, deſerves to be treated with contempt.
'We muſt not however believe that they are
'mere fables, without any meaning, like thoſe
'of the poets. They repreſent to us things that
'really happened. It would be likewiſe a dan-
'gerous error, and manifeſt impiety to inter-
'pret what is ſaid of the gods, as Evemerus the
'Meſſenian did, and apply it to the ancient
'kings and great generals. This would in the

‡ *Pag.* 358.

'end ſerve to deſtroy religion, and eſtrange 'men from the Deity§.' 'There are others, 'adds he much juſter in their notions, who 'have wrote, that whatever is related of Ty-'phon, Oſiris, Iſis and Orus muſt be underſtood 'of genii and demons. ‖ This was the opi-'nion of Pythagoras, Plato, Xenocrates and 'Chryſippus, who followed the ancient Theo-'logiſts in this notion. All thoſe great men 'maintained that theſe genii were very pow-'erful and far ſuperior to mortals; that they 'did not however partake of the Deity in a pure 'and ſimple manner, but were compoſed of a 'ſpiritual and a corporeal nature, and were con-'ſequently capable of pleaſures and pains, paſ-'ſions and changes; for there are virtues and 'vices among the genii as well as among men. 'Hence come the fables of the Greeks con-'cerning the Titans and Giants, the engage-'ments of Python againſt Apollo, and the fu-'ries and extravagancies of Bacchus, with ſeve-'ral other fictions like thoſe of Oſiris and Ty-'phon. Hence it is likewiſe that Homer ſpeaks 'of good and evil demons. Plato calls the firſt 'tutelary deities, becauſe they are mediators 'between the Deity and men, carry up the 'prayers of mortals to heaven, and bring us 'from thence the knowledge and revelation 'of ſecret and future things‡.' 'Empedocles,

§ *Ibid.* ‖ *Pag.* 360. ‡ *Pag.* 361.

'continues he, says, that the evil demons are 'punished for the faults they have committed. First the sun precipitates them into 'the air; the air casts them into the deep 'sea; the sea vomits them up upon the land, 'and from the earth they are raised at last to 'heaven. Thus are they transported from 'one place to another, till being in the end 'punished and purified, they return to the 'place adapted to their nature.' Plutarch, after having thus given a theological explanation of the Egyptian allegories, gives likewise the physical explications of them; but he rejects them all, and returns to his first doctrine. '† Osiris is neither the sun, nor the 'water, nor the earth, nor the heaven; but 'whatever there is in nature well disposed, 'well regulated, good and perfect, all that is 'the image of Osiris. Typhon is neither a-'ridity, nor the fire, nor the sea; but what-'ever is hurtful, inconstant and irregular.' We must observe that in this Egyptian allegory, Osiris does not signify, as in other places, the first principle of Deity, the Agathos of Plato, but the son of Ammon, the Apollo of the Greeks, Jupiter the Conductor, a god inferior to the supreme Deity. It was an ancient opinion among the Pagans and Hebrews, that the Divinity had united himself to the

† *Pag.* 376.

first and most perfect production of his power.

Plutarch goes farther in another treatise, and explains to us the origin of evil: his reasoning on this occasion is equally solid and subtile, and is as follows†: 'The maker of 'the world being perfectly good, formed all 'things at first, as far as was possible, like 'himself. The world at its birth received 'from him who made it all sorts of good 'things: whatever it has at present of unhappy and wicked, is an indisposition foreign 'to its nature. God cannot be the cause of 'evil, because he is sovereignly good: matter 'cannot be the cause of evil, because it has no 'active force: but evil comes from a third 'principle, neither so perfect as God, nor so 'imperfect as matter. This third being is intelligent nature, which hath within itself a 'source, a principle, and a cause of motion.'

I have already shewn that the schools of Pythagoras and Plato asserted liberty of will. The former expresses it by that faculty of the soul, whereby it can either raise or debase itself; the other, by the wings of the soul, that is, the love of virtue and the love of pleasure, which may move different ways. Plutarch follows the same principles, and makes liberty consist in the activity of the soul, by which it is the source of its own determinations.

† *Plut. de Anim. form. p.* 1015.

This opinion therefore ought not to be looked upon as modern; it is at once both natural and philosophical. The soul can always separate and reunite, recal and compare her ideas, and on this activity depends her liberty. We can always think upon other goods than those we are actually thinking of. It must be owned that the passions, by the strong sensations they excite in us, sometimes take up all the capacity of the soul, and hinder it from reflecting; they darken its discerning faculty, and hurry it on to an assent; they transform objects, and place them in a wrong light: but strong as they are, they are never invincible; it is difficult indeed, but not impossible, to surmount them; it is always in our power gradually to diminish their force, and prevent their excess. This is the warfare of man on earth, and this is the triumph of virtue. The heathens feeling this tyranny of the passions, were convinced by the light of nature alone of the necessity of a celestial power to subdue them: they always represent virtue to us as a divine energy descending from heaven: they are continually bringing into their poems guardian deities, who inspire, enlighten and strengthen us; to shew that heroic virtues can only proceed from the gods. These were the principles upon which the wise ancients went, in their arguments against those

notions of fatality, which are alike destructive of religion, morality and society.

To return to the Egyptians. Their doctrine, according to Plutarch, supposes, 1. That the world was created without any physical or moral evil, by a Being infinitely good. 2. That several genii abusing their liberty, fell into crimes, and thereby into misery. 3. That these genii must suffer expiatory punishments till they are purified and restored to their first state. 4. That the god Orus, the son of Isis and Osiris, and who fights with the evil principle, is a subordinate deity, like Jupiter the conductor the son of Saturn.

Let us consult next the Mythology of the Orientals: the nearer we approach the first origin of nations, the more pure shall we find their theology. '* Zoroaster, says Plutarch, 'taught that there are two gods contrary to 'each other in their operations; the one the 'author of all the good, the other of all the e-'vil in nature. The good Principle he calls 'Oromazes, the other the demon Arimanius†. 'He says that the one resembles light and 'truth, the other darkness and ignorance. 'There is likewise a middle god between these 'two, named Mythras‡, whom the Persians 'call the intercessor or mediator. The Magi

* *De Isid. et Osirid. p.* 370. † *Ibid.*

‡ Διὸ καὶ Μίθρην Πέρσαι τὸν Μεσίτην ὀνομάζουσιν.

'add, that Oromazes is born of the pureſt 'light, and Arimanius of darkneſs; that they 'continually make war upon one another, 'and that Oromazes made ſix genii, goodneſs, 'truth, juſtice, wiſdom, plenty and joy; and 'Arimanius made ſix others to oppoſe them, 'malice, falſhood, injuſtice, folly, want and 'ſadneſs. Oromazes having withdrawn him-'ſelf to as great a diſtance from the ſphere of 'Arimanius, as the ſun is from the earth, 'beautified the heavens with ſtars and con-'ſtellations. He created afterwards four and 'twenty other genii, and put them into an 'egg (by which the ancients mean the earth;) 'but Arimanius and his genii brake through 'this ſhining egg, and immediately evil was 'blended and confounded with good. But 'there will come a time appointed by fate, 'when Arimanius will be entirely deſtroyed 'and extirpated; the earth will change its 'form, and become plain and even; and hap-'py men will have only one and the ſame 'life, language and government.' Theo-pompus writes alſo, 'that according to the 'doctrine of the Magi, theſe gods muſt make 'war for nine thouſand years, the one de-'ſtroying the other's work, till at laſt ‖ hell 'ſhall be no more; Then men ſhall be happy, 'and their bodies become tranſparent. The

‖ Adas.

'God who made all things keeps himself con-
'cealed till that time; an interval not too
'long for a god, but rather like a moment of
'sleep.'

We have loſt the ancient books of the firſt Perſians; ſo that in order to judge of their Mythology, we muſt have recourſe to the Oriental philoſophers of our own time, and ſee if there be ſtill left among the diſciples of Zoroaſter, any traces of the ancient doctrine of their maſter. The famous Dr. Hyde, a divine of the church of England, who had travelled into the Eaſt, and perfectly underſtood the language of the country, has tranſlated the following paſſages out of Sharifthani, an Arabian philoſopher of the fifteenth century †.

'The firſt magi did not look upon the two
'principles as co-eternal, but believed that
'light was eternal, and that darkneſs was pro-
'duced in time; and the origin of this evil
'principle they account for in this manner:
'Light can produce nothing but light, and
'can never be the origin of evil; how then
'was evil produced? Light, ſay they, pro-
'duced ſeveral beings, all of them ſpiritual,
'luminous and powerful; but their chief,
'whoſe name was Ahriman or Arimanius, had
'an evil thought contrary to the light: he

† *Hyde Rel. ant. Perſ. cap. 9. p. 163. et cap. 22. p. 294.*

'doubted, and by that doubting he became 'dark. From hence proceeded all evils; dif-'ſenſion, malice, and every thing elſe of a 'contrary nature to the light. Theſe two 'principles made war upon one another, till 'at laſt peace was concluded, upon condition 'that the lower world ſhould be in ſubjection 'to Arimanius for ſeven thouſand years; af-'ter this ſpace of time he is to ſurrender back 'the world to the light.' Here we ſee the four notions that I ſpeak of in the foregoing work: 1. A ſtate before good and evil were blended and confounded together. 2. A ſtate after they were ſo blended and confounded. 3. A ſtate when evil ſhall be entirely deſtroyed. 4. A middle god between the good and the evil principle.

As the doctrine of the Perſian Magi is a ſequel of the doctrine of the Indian Brachmans, we muſt conſult the one to put the other in a clear light. We have but few traces left of the ancient theology of the Gymnoſophiſts, yet thoſe, which Strabo has preſerved, ſuppoſe the two ſtates of the world, that of nature in its purity, and that of nature corrupted. When this hiſtorian has deſcribed the life and manners of the Brachmans, he adds, '† Thoſe 'philoſophers look upon the ſtate of men in 'this life to be like that of children in their

† *Lib. 15. p. 713, 714. Ed. Lut. Par. 1620.*

'mother's womb; death, according to their 'notion, being a birth to a true and a happy 'life. They believe, that whatever happens 'to mortals here does not deserve the name 'either of good or evil. They have many no-'tions in common with the Greeks; and like 'them believe that the world had a beginning, 'and will have an end; and that God who 'made it, and governs it, is every where pre-'sent to his work.' The same author goes on in this manner; 'Oneſecritus being ſent 'by Alexander the Great to inform himſelf 'of the life, manners and doctrine of thoſe 'philoſophers, found a Brachman named Ca-'lanus, who taught him the following prin-'ciples. Formerly, plenty reigned over all 'nature; milk, wine, honey and oil flowed 'from fountains; but men having made an 'ill uſe of this felicity, Jupiter deprived them 'of it, and condemned them to labour for 'the ſuſtenance of their lives.'

In order to form a better judgment of the doctrine of the ancient Gymnoſophiſts, I have conſulted what has been tranſlated of the Vedam, which is the ſacred book of the modern Bramins: tho' its antiquity be not perhaps ſo great as it is affirmed to be, yet there is no denying but it contains the ancient traditions of thoſe people, and of their philoſophers. 'Tis plain by this book, '* That the Bramins ac-

* *See Abrah. Roger, of the Religion of the*

'knowledge one ſole and ſupreme God, whom 'they called Viſtnou; that his firſt and moſt 'ancient production was a ſecondary god, 'named Brama, whom the ſupreme God 'formed out of a flower that floated upon the 'ſurface of the great deep before the formati-'on of the world; and that Viſtnou after-'wards, on account of Brama's virtue, grati-'tude and fidelity, gave him power to form the 'univerſe.' They believe moreover, '‡ That 'ſouls are eternal emanations from the divine 'Eſſence, or at leaſt that they were produced 'long before the formation of the world; 'that they were originally in a ſtate of purity, 'but having ſinned, were thrown down into 'the bodies of men, or of beaſts according to 'their reſpective demerits; ſo that the body, 'where the ſoul reſides, is a ſort of dungeon 'or priſon.' Laſtly, they hold, that 'after a 'certain number of tranſmigrations, all ſouls 'ſhall be re-united to their origin, re-admitted 'into the company of the gods, and deified§.'

I ſhould hardly have thought theſe tradi-tions authentic, or have brought myſelf to truſt to the tranſlators of the Vedam, if this doctrine had not been perfectly agreeable to

Bram. Book ii. *Part* 1. *chap.* 1. *et Kircher Sina Illuſt.*

‡ *Ibid. Roger. Part* 2. *chap.* 7.

§ *Abr. Kircher, Sina Illuſt.*

that of Pythagoras, which I gave an account of a little before: This philoſopher taught the Greeks nothing but what he had learned from the Gymnoſophiſts.

The diſcovery of theſe uniform and agreeing ſentiments in Greece, Egypt, Perſia, and the Indies, made me deſirous to advance farther into the Eaſt, and to carry my reſearches as far as China. I applied myſelf accordingly to ſuch as underſtood the language of that country, had ſpent ſeveral years in it, and were well verſed in the original books of that nation. And in this point particularly I have made great uſe of the informations I have received from a gentleman of a ſuperior genius, who does not care to be mentioned till he has publiſhed a large work upon theſe matters, which will be of ſervice to religion, and do honour to human underſtanding. In the mean time he has allowed me to publiſh the following paſſages, which he tranſlated himſelf out of ſome ancient Chineſe books that have been brought into Europe; and which may be ſeen both at Paris and at Rome; ſo that all who underſtand the language may judge of the faithfulneſs of the tranſlation. The ancient commentaries on the book Yking, i. e. the book of Changes, continually ſpeak of a double heaven, a primitive and a poſterior. The firſt heaven is there deſcribed in the following manner: 'All things were then in a happy

'ſtate, every thing was beautiful, every thing 'was good, all beings were perfect in their 'kind. In this happy age heaven and earth 'employed their virtues jointly to embelliſh 'nature. There was no jarring in the ele-'ments, no inclemency in the air, all things 'grew without labour; an univerſal fertility 'reigned every where. The active and paſſive 'virtues conſpired together, without any ef-'fort or oppoſition, to produce and perfect the 'univerſe.' In the books which the Chineſe call King or Sacred, we read the following paſ-ſage; 'Whilſt the firſt ſtate of heaven laſted, 'a pure pleaſure and a perfect tranquillity 'reigned over all nature. There were neither 'labour, nor pains, nor ſorrow, nor crimes. 'Nothing made oppoſition to the will of man.' The philoſophers who ſtuck to theſe ancient traditions, and particularly Tchouangſe, ſay, 'That in the ſtate of the firſt heaven man 'was united inwardly to the ſupreme Reaſon, 'and that outwardly he practiſed all the works 'of juſtice. The heart rejoiced in truth, and 'there was no mixture of falſhood; then the 'four ſeaſons of the year ſucceeded each other 'regularly without confuſion: there were no 'impetuous winds, nor exceſſive rains; the 'ſun and the moon, without ever being cloud-'ed, furniſhed a light purer and brighter than 'at preſent. The five planets kept on their 'courſe without any inequality. There was

'nothing which did harm to man, or which 'ſuffered any hurt from him. An univerſal 'amity and harmony reigned over all na-'ture.'

On the other hand the philoſopher Hoainantſe ſpeaking of the latter heaven, ſays, 'The pillars of heaven were broken; the 'earth was ſhaken to its very foundations; 'the heavens ſunk lower towards the North; 'the ſun, the moon and the ſtars changed their 'motions; the earth fell to pieces; the wa-'ters encloſed within its boſom burſt forth 'with violence, and overflowed it. Man re-'belling againſt heaven, the ſyſtem of the u-'niverſe was quite diſordered; the ſun was 'eclipſed, the planets altered their courſe, and 'the univerſal harmony was diſturbed.' The philoſophers Wentſe and Lietſe, who lived long before Hoainantſe, expreſs themſelves almoſt in the ſame terms. 'The univerſal fer-'tility of nature, ſay theſe ancient authors, 'degenerated into an ugly barrenneſs, the 'plants faded, the trees withered away, diſ-'conſolate nature refuſed to diſtribute her 'uſual bounty. All creatures declared war a-'gainſt one another; miſeries and crimes 'overflowed the face of the earth.' 'All 'theſe evils aroſe, ſays the book Liki, from 'man's deſpiſing the ſupreme Monarch of 'the univerſe: he would needs diſpute about 'truth and falſhood, and theſe diſputes baniſh-

'ed the eternal Reason. He then fixed his 'looks on terrestrial objects, and loved them 'to excess; hence arose the passions; he be-'came gradually transformed into the ob-'jects he loved, and the celestial reason entire-'ly abandoned him. Such was the original 'source of all crimes, which drew after them 'all manner of miseries sent by heaven for 'the punishment thereof.'

The same books speak of a time when every thing is to be restored to its first splendor, by the coming of a hero called Kiun-Tse, which signifies Shepherd and Prince, to whom they give likewise the names of, the most Holy, the universal Teacher, and the supreme Truth. He answers exactly to the Mythras of the Persians, the Orus, or second Osiris of the Egyptians, the Apollo or Mercury of the Greeks, and the Brama of the Indians.

The Chinese books speak likewise of the sufferings and conflicts of Kiun-Tse, just as the Persians do of the combats of Mythras, the Egyptians of the murder of Osiris, the Tyrians of the death of Adonis, and the Greeks of the labours and painful exploits of a son of Jupiter who came down upon earth to exterminate monsters. It looks as if the source of all these allegories was an ancient tradition common to all nations, that the middle god was not to expiate and put an end to crimes but by his own great sufferings. In speaking of the

death of Adonis in the foregoing work, I have made advantage of this tradition to pave the way for what Daniel says afterwards to Cyrus concerning the suffering Messiah. I shall here give the reader an account of what I find in the religion of the Tyrians, and in the doctrine of the ancients, to authorize the new allegory which is added in the present edition. 1. The Tyrians acknowledged one supreme God, named Bel, who is the same with the Jehovah of the Hebrews *. 2. They held likewise a subordinate god, whom they called Thammuz, Adon, Adonis, which signifies the Lord †. 3. Adonis, Osiris, Apollo and Hercules, are the same ‡. 4. The death of Adonis, killed by a boar, is the same with the murder of Osiris slain by Typhon, or the evil principle §. 5. Solemn days were instituted by the Phoenicians to bewail the death of Adonis, and to sing praises to him as risen from the dead ‖. 6. Some ancient and venerable writers among the Christians believed, that the fable of Adonis was a corruption of an old tradition concerning the suffer-

* *Seldenus de Diis Syris, Synt.* 2. *cap.* 1. *de Belo.* † *Hesyeb. on the word* Adonis.

‡ *See above, p.* 10. § *Seld. cap.* ii. *de Thammuz.* ‖ *St. Jer. Comm.* 3. *upon Ezek. St. Cyril. book* ii. *Comm. upon Isai. Procop. upon the* 18*th ch. of Isa. Lucian. de Ded Syr. p.* 1058. *Macrob. Saturn.* 1. *cap.* 21.

ing Meſſiah, and apply all the Tyrian ceremonies to our myſteries *. 7. Adonis loved Venus, eſpouſed her, and ſhe became the mother of the gods †. 8. Urania, Aſtarte, Venus and Proſerpine are the ſame goddeſs ‡. 9. Some think that Aſtarte is the morning ſtar, Lucifer, or a fallen ſtar ‖. 10. According to the doctrine of the ancients, as well Pagan as Hebrew, ſpirits fell not at once, but by degrees, that is to ſay, from the fixed ſtars into the region of the planets, from the planets to the earth, and from the earth to the infernal regions §. For which reaſon I have repreſented theſe three different falls of ſpirits by the three names of Aſtarte, Venus and Proſerpine. Theſe are the foundations on which I have built the allegory of Adonis and Urania, which Amenophis rehearſes to Cyrus in the ſeventh book. The only liberty I have taken is to make Urania repreſent, not the divine Wiſdom, but fallen intelligences; as Pſyche in Apuleius does not repreſent the ſoul of the world, but ſouls unfaithful to love: theſe kinds of metonymy are

* *Jul. Firmic. de Myſt. p.* 151.

† *Seld. de Diis Syris, Synt.* 2. *c.* 2. *de Aſtarte et cap.* 4. *de Ven. Syriac.* ‡ *Ibid.*

‖ *Ibid.* 224. *Ed. Lugd. Bat. et Suidas* ἀφροσύνης ἄστρον. § *Plutarch. de Iſid. et Oſirid. et Rittang. Cab. denud. de revol. anim. part.* 1. *cap.* 1. *See ſup. p.* 45

frequent in the allegorical and mythological writers.

We ſee then that the doctrines of the primitive perfection of nature, its fall and its reſtoration by a divine hero, are equally manifeſt in the Mythologies of the Greeks, Egyptians, Perſians, Indians and Chineſe.

Let us now look into the Hebrew Mythology. By this I mean Rabbiniſm, or the philoſophy of the Jewiſh doctors, and particularly of the Eſſenes. Theſe philoſophers aſſerted, according to the teſtimony of Joſephus*, 'that 'the literal ſenſe of the ſacred text was only 'an image of hidden truths. They changed, 'ſays Philo †, the words and precepts of wiſ-'dom into allegories, after the cuſtom of their 'anceſtors, who had left them ſeveral books 'for their inſtruction in this ſcience.' 'Twas the univerſal taſte of the Orientals to make uſe of corporeal images to repreſent the properties and operations of ſpirits.

This ſymbolical ſtyle ſeems in a great meaſure authorized by the ſacred writers. The prophet Daniel repreſents God to us under the image of the ANTIENT OF DAYS. The Hebrew Mythologiſts and Cabaliſts, who were a ſucceſſion of the ſchool of the Eſſenes, took occaſion from thence to expreſs the divine attri-

* *Joſeph. de Bello Jud. lib. 2. cap. 12.*

† *Phil. de legis alleg. lib. 2. pag. 53.*

butes by the members of the body of the ANTIENT OF DAYS. We ſee this allegory carried to an extravagance in the books of the Rabbins. They ſpeak there of the dew that diſtilled from the Brain of the ANTIENT OF DAYS, from his ſkull, his hair, his forehead, his eyes, and eſpecially from his wonderful beard. Theſe compariſons are undoubtedly abſurd, and unbecoming the Majeſty of God: but the cabaliſtical philoſophers pretend to authorize them by ſome metaphyſical notions.

The creation, according to them, is a picture of the divine perfections: all created beings are conſequently images more or leſs perfect of the ſupreme Being, in proportion as they have more or leſs conformity with their original. Hence it follows that all creatures are in ſome reſpect like one another, and that man or the microcoſm has a reſemblance of the great world or macrocoſm; the material world, of the intelligible world, and the intelligible world, of the Archetype, which is God. Such are the principles upon which the allegorical expreſſions of the Cabaliſts are founded. If we ſtrip their Mythology of this myſterious language, we ſhall find in it ſublime notions very like thoſe we have before admired in the heathen philoſophers. I ſhall mention four, which are clearly enough expreſſed in the works of the Rabbins Irira, Moſchech and Jitzack,

which Rittangelius has translated in his Cabala denudata.

1. 'All spiritual substances, angels, human 'souls, and even the soul of the Messiah *, 'were created from the beginning of the world: 'and consequently our first parent, of whom 'Moses speaks, represents not an individual 'person, but all mankind governed by one sole 'Head. In that primitive state every thing 'was glorious and perfect: there was nothing 'in the universe that suffered, because there 'was no such thing as crime. Nature was a 'real and a spotless image of the divine perfec-'tions.' This answers to the reign of Ammon, Oromazes and Saturn. 2. '† The soul of the 'Messiah, by his perseverance in the divine 'love, came to a strict union with the pure 'Godhead‡, and was deservedly advanced to 'be the King, the Head, and the Guide of all 'spirits.' This notion has some resemblance of those which the Persians had of Mythras, the Egyptians of Osiris and Orus, and the Greeks of Jupiter the Guide, who led souls into the super-celestial abode. 3. '§ The vir-

* *Vision. Ezekiel, Mercav. Exp. apud Rittang. pag.* 225. *Tom. III.* † *Pag.* 226.

‡ *The Hellenistic Hebrews call this union of the Messiah with the Divinity, Hyper-azilutical, which signifies super-substantial.*

§ *Ibid. de revol. anim. part.* 1. *cap.* 1. *p.* 224.

'tue, perfection and beatitude of ſpirits or Zephirots *, conſiſted in continually receiving 'and rendring back the rays which flowed from 'the infinite centre, that ſo there might be an 'eternal circulation of light and happineſs in 'all ſpirits. Two ſorts of Zephirots failed in 'the obſervance of this eternal law. The Cherubim, who were of a ſuperior order, did not 'render back this light, but kept it within 'themſelves, ſwelled, and became like veſſels 'that are too full; at laſt they burſt in pieces, 'and their ſphere was changed into a gloomy 'chaos. The Iſchim, who were of an inferior 'order, ſhut their eyes againſt this light, turning themſelves towards ſenſible objects §; 'they forgat the ſupreme beatitude of their nature, and took up with the enjoyment of 'created pleaſures. They fell thereby into 'mortal bodies. 4. ‡ Souls paſs through ſeveral 'revolutions before they return to their primitive ſtate; but after the coming of the Meſſiah, all ſpirits will be reſtored to order, and 'to the happineſs which they enjoyed before 'the ſin of our firſt parent.' I ſhall now leave the reader to judge whether theſe four notions

* *A general word which ſignifies ſpirits of all kinds.*

§ *Phil. Cabal. diſſert. 8. cap. 13. pag. 173. Tom. III. Rittang.*

‡ *De Revol. anim. p. 307.*

have not a great reſemblance of thoſe which we have found in China, Perſia, Egypt and Greece, and whether I had not ſufficient authority to give the four mythological pictures which are in the foregoing work.

In all theſe ſyſtems we ſee that the ancient philoſophers, in order to refute the objections of the impious concerning the origin and duration of evil, adopted the doctrine of the preexiſtence of ſouls, and their final reſtoration. Several fathers of the church have maintained the firſt opinion, as the only philoſophical way of explaining original ſin; and Origen made uſe of the latter, to oppoſe the libertines of his time. It is far from my intention to defend theſe two opinions; all the uſe I would make of them is to ſhew, that reaſon alone furniſhes arguments ſufficient to confound ſuch philoſophers as refuſe to believe unleſs they can comprehend.

It is for this reaſon that I make Daniel ſpeak a different language from Eleazar. The prophet adviſes Cyrus to lay aſide all refined ſpeculations, and to leave to God the care of juſtifying the incomprehenſible ſteps of his providence; he plunges him again in an obſcurity more wholſom and more ſuitable to human weakneſs, than all the conjectures of philoſophers; he reduces what we are to believe on this ſubject to theſe four principal truths.

1. God being infinitely good, cannot pro-

duce wicked and miſerable beings; and there-
fore the moral and phyſical evil, which we ſee
in the univerſe, muſt come from the abuſe that
men make of their liberty. 2. Human nature
is fallen from the firſt purity in which it was
created; and this mortal life is a ſtate of trial,
in which ſouls are cured of their corruption,
and merit a happy immortality by their vir-
tue. 3. God united himſelf to human nature
in order to expiate moral evil by his ſacrifice:
the Meſſiah will come at laſt in his glory to de-
ſtroy phyſical evil, and renew the face of the
earth. 4. Theſe truths have been tranſmitted
to us from age to age, from the time of the de-
luge till now, by an univerſal tradition; other
nations have obſcured and altered this tradition
by their fables; it has been preſerved in its pu-
rity no where but in the Holy Scriptures, the
authority of which cannot be diſputed with any
ſhadow of reaſon.

It is a common notion that all the footſteps
of natural and revealed religion which we ſee
in the heathen poets and philoſophers, are ori-
ginally owing to their having read the books
of Moſes; but it is impoſſible to anſwer the ob-
jections which are made againſt this opinion.
The Jews and their books were too long con-
cealed in a corner of the earth, to be reaſonably
thought the primitive light of the Gentiles:
we muſt go farther back, even to the deluge.
It is ſurprizing that thoſe, who are convinced

of the authority of the ſacred books, have not made advantage of this ſyſtem to prove the truth of the Moſaic hiſtory concerning the origin of the world, the univerſal deluge, and the re-peopling of the earth by Noah. It is hard to account for that uniformity of ſentiments which we find in the religions of all nations, otherwiſe than by the doctrine which I have put in the mouth of Daniel.

As the four great principles, which I have mentioned, are the foundation of our religion, my deſign was to do homage to it, by endeavouring to defend them againſt the vain cavils of audacious critics and the ſuperſtitious prejudices of weak minds. One of the chief ſources of modern incredulity is the falſe notion which impious men have entertained of Chriſtianity. Nor indeed can we think it ſtrange, if, while the Chriſtian myſteries are repreſented in a wrong light, the principles of religion confounded with the abuſes of thoſe principles, and ſcholaſtic expoſitions with doctrines of faith, the miracles ſhould paſs for impoſture, and the facts for fables. If we would engage thoſe, who in ſimplicity of heart ſeek after truth, to liſten to the proofs of revealed religion, we muſt begin by ſhewing them that its doctrines are worthy of God; and this has been my aim throughout the foregoing work. Whether I have ſucceeded or not, my intention was upright; and I ſhall not repine at the imperfec-

tion of this attempt, if I may have given occaſion to any perſon of more learning and depth to recommend that philoſophy, which teaches never to employ the imagination but as the ſervant of reaſon, to direct all improvements of the underſtanding to the purification of the heart, and avoiding all oſtentatious parade of the ſciences, to make uſe of them only to diſcover the beauties of eternal truth to thoſe who are capable of being enamoured with them.

A

LETTER

FROM

M. FRERET

(Member of the ACADEMY of INSCRIPTIONS at PARIS)

TO THE

AUTHOR,

Concerning the Chronology of his Work.

SIR,

THERE have perhaps been more different ſyſtems formed, to ſettle the hiſtory of Cyrus, and the chronology of the kings of Babylon, than for any other part of ancient ſtory. But theſe hypotheſes are all ſo defective, and ſo ill connected with cotemporary events, that we are ſtopped almoſt at every ſtep, by the contradictions and inconſiſtencies we meet with in them. This every man's experience ſhews him to be true, who reads the writings

of Scaliger, Petau, Uſher, Marſham, the biſhop of Meaux and Prideaux.

But in your work you have wiſely avoided theſe difficulties, and have hit upon the beſt method of reconciling the contradictory accounts which Herodotus, Cteſias, Xenophon, and other ancient writers, give us of Cyrus. You have preſerved this prince's war with his grandfather Aſtyages; a war which the ancients allow to be certain, and which Xenophon himſelf acknowledges in his retreat of the ten thouſand; he ſuppreſſed this fact in his Cyropaedia, only to avoid throwing a blemiſh on Cyrus's character, by a war which he thought contrary to natural duty: Prideaux has likewiſe thought fit to ſuppreſs it. Marſham has invented a mere romance, and ſuppoſes, that there were two different kingdoms of the Medes, which were at the ſame time governed by two Aſtyages's, one the grandfather, and the other the enemy of Cyrus. The method you have taken is more ſimple, and more agreeable to ancient ſtory; you have paved the way for this war, and conducted it in ſuch a manner, that it does in no wiſe ſtain the character of your hero.

The omiſſion of ſo conſiderable an event led Xenophon into two anachroniſms, in order to find employment for Cyrus in his younger years: this author antedates the taking of Sardis 25 years, and that of Babylon, 28. As this

hiſtorian had nothing in view but military virtues and the qualities of a true patriot, whereby to form his hero, his ſcheme did not furniſh him with the ſame materials to fill up Cyrus's youth, as yours does. He had no thoughts of inſtilling into his mind ſuch principles as would moſt effectually ſecure him from the dangers which beſet the virtue of princes, or of guarding him before-hand againſt the corruption of falſe politics and falſe philoſophy, which are, in their conſequences, equally fatal to ſociety. Xenophon, having been educated in Greece, was acquainted only with the kingdoms of Sparta and Macedon, whoſe kings were, properly ſpeaking, nothing more than the chief perſons in the ſtate; and the magiſtrates were rather their collegues than their miniſters. He had no notion of the abuſes of deſpotic power, and therefore could have no thoughts of preventing them. Whereas your deſign being to form a king, rather than a conqueror, a prince better qualified to make his people happy under his government, than to force them to ſubmit to his laws; you are thereby enabled to give Cyrus full employment in his youth by making him travel, and that very conſiſtently with true chronology.

Cyrus died the 218th year of Nabonaſſar, and 530 years before the Chriſtian Aera, which I ſhall not loſe time in proving, becauſe acknowledged by all chronologers. This prince

was then 70 years of age, according to Dinon, the author of a celebrated history of Persia *. He was therefore born in the 148th year of Nabonassar, 600, or 599 years before Christ. He had reigned, according to the astronomical canon, nine years at Babylon. This city was therefore taken in the 61st year of his age, the 209th of Nabonassar, and the 539th before Christ.

Sardis was taken, according to Soficrates in Diogenes Laertius †, and according to Solinus ‡, in the fourth year of the 58th Olympiad; but according to Eusebius, in the first year of that Olympiad; and consequently, either in the 545th or 548th year before Christ, and the 52d or 55th year of Cyrus's life. He reigned 30 years over the Medes and Persians, according to Herodotus and Ctesias, and he was 40 years old according to Dinon, when he mounted the throne: which fixes the beginning of his reign to the 188th year of Nabonassar, the first year of the 55th Olympiad, and the 560th year before Christ. ‖ Eusebius tells us, that all chronologists agreed in placing the beginning of Cyrus's reign over the Medes and Persians in this year of the 55th Olympiad. But historians have neither told us how many years

* *Cic. de Divin. lib.* 2. † *Diog. Laert. lib.* 2. *Periand.* ‡ *Chor.* viii. ‖ *Praepar. Evang. lib.* x.

Cyrus's war with the Medes lasted, nor any particulars of what happened in the first forty years of his life: you are therefore at full liberty to fill up this space with whatever you judge most proper to your design; and your chronology is not only agreeable to that of the Greeks and Persians, but likewise to that of the Babylonians.

Xenophon indeed has changed all this chronology: according to him Cyrus went to the court of Media at 12 years of age, stay'd there 4 years, returned in his 16th year; entered into the class of the Ἔφηβοι or Young-men in his 17th, and continued in it 10 years. To which he adds, that Astyages died in this interval, but this is not true; for that prince reigned till he was conquered by Cyrus in the year 560, and did not die till some years after: you have therefore done well in not following Xenophon. According to him, Cyrus entered Media at the head of 30000 men when he was 28 years of age; subdued the Armenians at 29; marched against the Lydians, and took Sardis at 30; and made himself master of Babylon at 33, about the year 567. This is the 179th year of Nabonassar, and the 36th of Nabuchodonosor, who reigned 7 years after it; these 7 years added to the 21 years of the four kings who reigned in Babylon after him, make the 28 years of the anachronism above-mentioned. The rest of Xenophon's chronology

is of no importance to your work. He does not determine the time of the death either of Mandana or Cambyſes, and you are therefore entirely at liberty to place theſe events as will beſt ſuit with your plan.

The city of Tyre was not taken till the 19th year of Nabuchodonoſor, after a thirteen years ſiege, which began the ſeventh of that prince's reign, according to the Phoenician annals which Joſephus had read. In the year Jeruſalem was taken, which was the 18th year of Nabuchodonoſor, the prophet Ezekiel threatens Tyre with approaching ruin; it therefore was not taken at that time; Cyrus was then 15 years of age: now, as his travels are all placed between the 28th and 32d year of his age, and as he does not go to Tyre till after his travels in Greece, you are guilty of no anachroniſm in this particular; moreover, what you relate of the hiſtory of this city ſufficiently fills up the 15 or 16 years from the time of its being conquered by the Babylonians.

We have no where any expreſs paſſage whereby to fix the time of Nabuchodonoſor's madneſs; that he was mad is certain from Daniel, and it is very probable it happened towards the end of his life; my reaſons for it are theſe. Jehoiachin was carried into captivity in the 8th year of Nabuchodonoſor's reign over Judea, and the 4th of his reign in Babylon; that is, the 148th year of Nabonaſ-

far, 600 years before Chriſt, and the year Cyrus was born. We are told in Jeremiah *, and in the ſecond book of Kings †, that in the 37th year of Jehoiachin's captivity, Evilmerodach aſcended the throne of Babylon, took Jehoiachin out of priſon, admitted him to his own table, and heaped many honours upon him; this was the 184th year of Nabonaſſar, the 564th before Chriſt, and the 37th of Cyrus's age; at which time Nabuchodonoſor was yet alive, ſince he did not die till the 186th of Nabonaſſar, 562 years before Chriſt, and the 39th of Cyrus; Evilmerodach therefore did not only mount the throne in his father's life time, but he governed without conſulting him, and with ſo little dependance upon him, as not to fear provoking him by taking quite different meaſures from his, and heaping honours on a prince, whom his father had all along kept in fetters. Beroſus makes the prince, whom he calls Evilmerodach, to have reigned 10 years, the aſtronomical canon allows him but two, and calls him Ilovarodam; the Scripture places him upon the throne three years before the death of his father.

All theſe difficulties will vaniſh if we ſuppoſe that Nabuchodonoſor's madneſs began eight years before his death, and that his ſon Evilmerodach was from that time looked upon

* *Chap.* lii. *ver.* 31. † *Chap.* xxv. *ver.* 27.

as king, placed himself at the head of affairs, and governed the empire with his father's ministers; these eight years, joined with the two he reigned alone after his father's death, make up the ten years of Berosus; the holy scriptures begin his reign later, doubtless from the time that he removed the ministers who made him uneasy, which did not happen till the third year before the death of Nabuchodonosor. This prince's madness continued but seven years; after that time he recovered his senses, re-assumed the government, and published an edict in favour of the Jews, which is related in Daniel: his name had all along been made use of in the public acts, and for this reason the astronomical canon makes his son Ilovarodam to have reigned but two years; this canon was drawn up from the public acts. Nabuchodonosor's madness must have produced great revolutions in the court of Babylon, and we may form an idea of them from what passed in the court of France during that of Charles VI. when the management of affairs was one while lodged in the hands of the queen, sometimes in those of his children, and at other times in those of the great lords and princes of the blood. Upon this supposition, which is both easy and necessary, Nabuchodonosor's madness will have happened in the 179th year of Nabonassar, the 569th before Christ, and the 32d of Cyrus's age; this prince must have been inform-

ed of that event, for it was of great importance to him to know it; it is not to be doubted but it had its influence in the war of the Medes and Perſians. The kings of Babylon were allied to thoſe of the Medes; Nabuchodonoſor had married a daughter of Aſtyages; the Babylonians would have taken ſome part in this war, had it not been for the weakneſs of their government, occaſioned by the king's madneſs, and for the diviſions which prevailed at court among the different parties that contended for the direction of affairs. Nay, it is probable that queen Amytis endeavoured to reconcile the Medes and Perſians; becauſe, independently of the tyes of blood, it was againſt her intereſt to have either of thoſe nations ſubdue the other. The ſight of ſo famous a conqueror reduced to ſo deplorable a condition, muſt have been a very proper ſpectacle for the inſtruction of Cyrus, and you had great reaſon not to neglect it. He returned from his travels, according to your chronology, about the 32d year of his age, after Nabuchodonoſor's madneſs had already ſeized him: Cyrus ſpent near ſeven years in Perſia, governing under his father; during which time all the intrigues between Cyaxares and Soranes were carried on, Cambyſes made war with the Medes, and Aſtyages died; after which Cyrus went to Babylon, to negotiate affairs with Amytis a little before Nabuchodonoſor's madneſs left

him; this time was judiciously chosen to make the sight more affecting and instructive.

Your chronology, with regard to political affairs, and the revolutions which happened in Cyrus's time, is therefore perfectly agreeable to that of the Greeks, Babylonians and Hebrews; let us now enquire, whether the great men whom you make Cyrus to have seen in his travels were his contemporaries; you may indeed be allowed a greater liberty in this case than in the former. You know how the ancients contradict one another with regard to the time when Zoroaster lived; which doubtless proceeds from hence, that the name of Zoroaster was given to all those who, at different times, reformed the religion of the Magi. The last of these was the most famous, and is the only one who is known by that name, or by the name of Zardousht in the East. Prideaux makes him cotemporary with Cambyses and Darius the son of Hystaspes, but it is very probable he lived some time before them. The Orientals, as may be seen in Dr. Hyde's work, make him to have lived under Gustaspes or Hystaspes, the father of Darab, who is the first Darius according to the Greeks. This Gustaspes was older than Cyrus, and may have been the same person whom you make his governor. Whence it necessarily follows, that the reformation of the religion of the Magi must have been made during

his reign, and that Zoroaſter lived at that time. The reformation made by Darius ſuppoſes that the Magi had aſſumed to themſelves very great authority, which he took away from them. He likewiſe corrupted the purity of Zoroaſter's religion, by a mixture of foreign idolatry. In his reign the worſhip of Anaitis was firſt brought into Perſia, contrary to the hypotheſis of Dr. Prideaux. Your ſcheme is more agreeable to the courſe of the hiſtory, and to thoſe facts which are common to the Greek, Perſian and Arabian writers.

Cyrus may have married Caſſandana at 18 years of age, and have lived with her nine or ten years; ſo that he may have travelled into Egypt about the 29th year of his age. Your chronology agrees exactly with the age of Amaſis. All chronologiſts concur in fixing the end of his reign to the year before Cambyſes's expedition, that is about the 525th year before Chriſt, and the 63d Olympiad. Herodotus makes his reign to have laſted 44 years; and conſequently places the beginning of it in the 569th year before Chriſt, and the 52d Olympiad, and about the 30th year of Cyrus. Diodorus indeed, who makes Amaſis to have reigned 55 years, ſuppoſes that he aſcended the throne in the 579th or 580th year before Chriſt and the 20th year of Cyrus's age: but theſe two opinions are eaſily reconciled. Herodotus begins Amaſis's reign at the end of

the revolution which placed him on the throne, and Diodorus at the beginning of his revolt.

Apries muſt have lived but a little time after the taking of Jeruſalem, ſince the prophet Jeremiah * foretels his death under the name of Pharaoh Hophra, as what was ſoon to happen. Jeruſalem was taken in the year 589 before Chriſt, and the 63d before Amaſis's death, which ſhews that the troubles in Egypt were already begun. According to your ſyſtem Amaſis governed all Egypt in tranquillity when Cyrus went thither, and Apries had already been dead ſeveral years †; which is agreeable both to profane and ſacred hiſtory, Cyrus being between 28 and 30 years of age when he travelled.

The Greek chronology indeed will not be ſo eaſily reconciled to yours, but the anachroniſm will not exceed 12 or 14 years. Chilo was according to Hermippus, as quoted by Diogenes Laertius ‡, advanced in age at the time of the 52d Olympiad. This Olympiad began in the 573d year before Chriſt, and ended in the 570th, which was the 30th of Cyrus. This was before his ephorate,

* *Chap.* xliv. *the laſt verſe.*

† *In this new edition the author has taken the liberty to vary a little from this chronology. Apries is yet living when Cyrus goes into Egypt.*

‡ *Diog. Laert. lib.* i.

which Pamphyla places in the 56th Olympiad, but this paſſage is manifeſtly corrupted. The anonymous author of the chronology of the Olympiads fixes the time of the magiſtracy of Chilo to that of the Archonſhip of Euthydemes at Athens, that is, to the 81ſt year before Xerxes's paſſage into Aſia, according to the chronology * of the Arundelian marbles. This was the 561 year before Chriſt, and the 38th of Cyrus, which agrees perfectly well with your chronology; for Cyrus might have ſeen Chilo eight years before, as he went to Sparta, and when he was thirty years of age.

Periander died, according to Soſicrates †, at the end of the 48th Olympiad, the 585th year before Chriſt, and the 16th of Cyrus. The ancients tell us he had reigned 40 years, and began to flouriſh about the 38th Olympiad. You poſtpone his death 12 or 14 years; but as you do this only to make Cyrus a witneſs of his deſperate death, the anachroniſm is a beauty, and is otherwiſe of little importance.

Piſiſtratus's reign over the Athenians did not begin till 560 years before Chriſt, 71 before the battle of Marathon, according to Thucydides ‡, and 100 before the tyranny of

* *Marm. Oxon. Chronol. Attic. Epoch.* 42.

† *Diog. Laert. lib.* i.

‡ *Lib.* vi. *p.* 449. 452. *et lib.* viii. *p.* 601. *Ariſt. Pol. lib.* vi. *p.* 12.

the 400 at Athens. Cyrus was then 40 years old, so that your anachronism here is only of 9 or 10 years. And with regard to Solon, you are guilty of no anachronism at all. His Archonship, and his reformation of the government of Athens, were in the year 597 before Christ, and the 3d year of the 46th Olympiad‡. He spent a considerable time in travelling, and did not return to Athens till he was advanced in years, which would not suffer him to be concerned in public affairs any more. He died at the age of 80 years, in the second year of Pisistratus's reign, according to Phanias of Eresa, and in the 41st year of Cyrus; who might therefore have conversed with him 9 or ten years before.

You ought likewise to give yourself as little concern about the bringing Pythagoras and Cyrus together. Dionysius Halicarnasseus tells us §, that the former went into Italy about the 50th Olympiad, that is about the 577th year before Christ. He makes use of the word κατὰ, (about) which shews that this date need not be strictly taken. And indeed Diogenes Laertius shews us, that he flourished about the 60th Olympiad, that is about 40 years after; which if we understand of the time of his death, which was at the age of 80,

‡ *Diog. Laert. and Plut. life of Solon.*

§ *D. Hal. lib.* xii.

he will then have been 50 years old when he went into Italy, and he will appear to have been born about the 520th year before Christ. If Pythagoras the philosopher be the same with him who offered to fight at the Olympic games among the children, and upon being rejected desired to be received among the men, and gained the prize in the 48th Olympiad; he was 16 or 17 in the year 585 before Christ, and was scarce older than Cyrus. This is the opinion of Dr. Bentley, who is able to defend himself against all the objections which have been made to him. But without entring into this dispute, it is sufficient for your vindication, that Pythagoras was returned from his travels, and capable of conferring with Cyrus when this prince went into Greece, in the year 565 before Christ; which cannot be denied in any of the different systems which the learned have formed concerning the time of Pythagoras's life.

You have likewise sufficient foundation for bringing him into a dispute with Anaximander. This philosopher must have seen Pythagoras though he was older than he, being, according to Apollodorus in Diogenes Laertius, 64 years of age in the 2d year of the 48th Olympiad, that is, in the year 585 before Christ. And it is likewise a beauty in your work to see the young Pythagoras triumphing over the sophistry of the Materialist. It is not to be

doubted but the Milesian philosopher was the first inventor of the doctrine of the Atomists; as Aristotle*, Cicero†, Plutarch ‡ and Simplicius § testify. The τὸ Ἄπειρον of Anaximander was an infinite matter: his doctrine is the same with that of Spinoza.

You see, Sir, that complaisance had no part in my approbation of the chronology of your book: you were not obliged to adhere so scrupulously to truth, you might have contented yourself with probability; the nature of your work did not require more: nevertheless this exactness will, I am persuaded, give it new beauties in the opinion of those who are versed in ancient history. Exactness is not incompatible with a fine imagination; and it degenerates into driness only when a writer is of a cold and heavy genius.

I am, &c.

FRERET.

* *Phys. lib.* i. *cap.* 4. † *De Nat. Deor. lib.* i. ‡ *Placit. Phil. lib.* i. *c.* 3.
§ *Comm. in Epict.*

THE END.

BOOKS printed and sold by ROBERT and ANDREW FOULIS.

SIR J. Davis on the Immortality of the Soul. a Poem.
Waller's Works in Verse and Prose.
Sir John Denham's Works.
Milton's Poetical Works in 2 vol:
The Works of the Earl of Roscommon.
Dryden's Fables and original Poems 2 vols
The Duke of Buckingham's Poems.
Congreve's Plays 2 vol:
——Poems on several occasions.
Prior's Poems 2 vol:
Addison's poetical Works 2 vol:
Parnelle's Works in Verse and Prose.
Gay's Poems 2 vol:
Garth's Dispensary, with the Key.
Dr. Young's Poem on the last Day.
——Force of Religion.
Sir Richard Steele's Plays.
Boileau's Art of Poetry, translated by Sir J. Soames and revised by Dryden.
——Lutrin, translated, with a preface by Mr. Rowe.
Somervile's Chace. a Poem.
——Hobbinol. a Poem.
The Fife Laird. The Mare of Colington and the Banishment of Poverty. three Scots Poems.
Allan Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd.
——Scots Proverbs.

Milton's Allegro and Penſeroſo. 4to.

The following books on the ſubject of Trade, in 12mo.

Propoſals and reaſons for conſtituting a Council of Trade in Scotland by the celebrated John Law.

A treatiſe concerning Money and Trade, by the ſame Author.

Sir Joſiah Child's Treatiſe concerning Trade.

Joſhua Gee on the Trade and Navigation of Great Britain.

England's Treaſure by foreign Trade, or the Ballance of our foreign Trade is the rule of our Treaſure. Written by Thomas Mun of London, Merchant, firſt publiſhed by his ſon in the year 1664.

The Queriſt. By Dr. George Berkley Biſhop of Cloyne.

Sir W. Petty's Political Arithmetic.

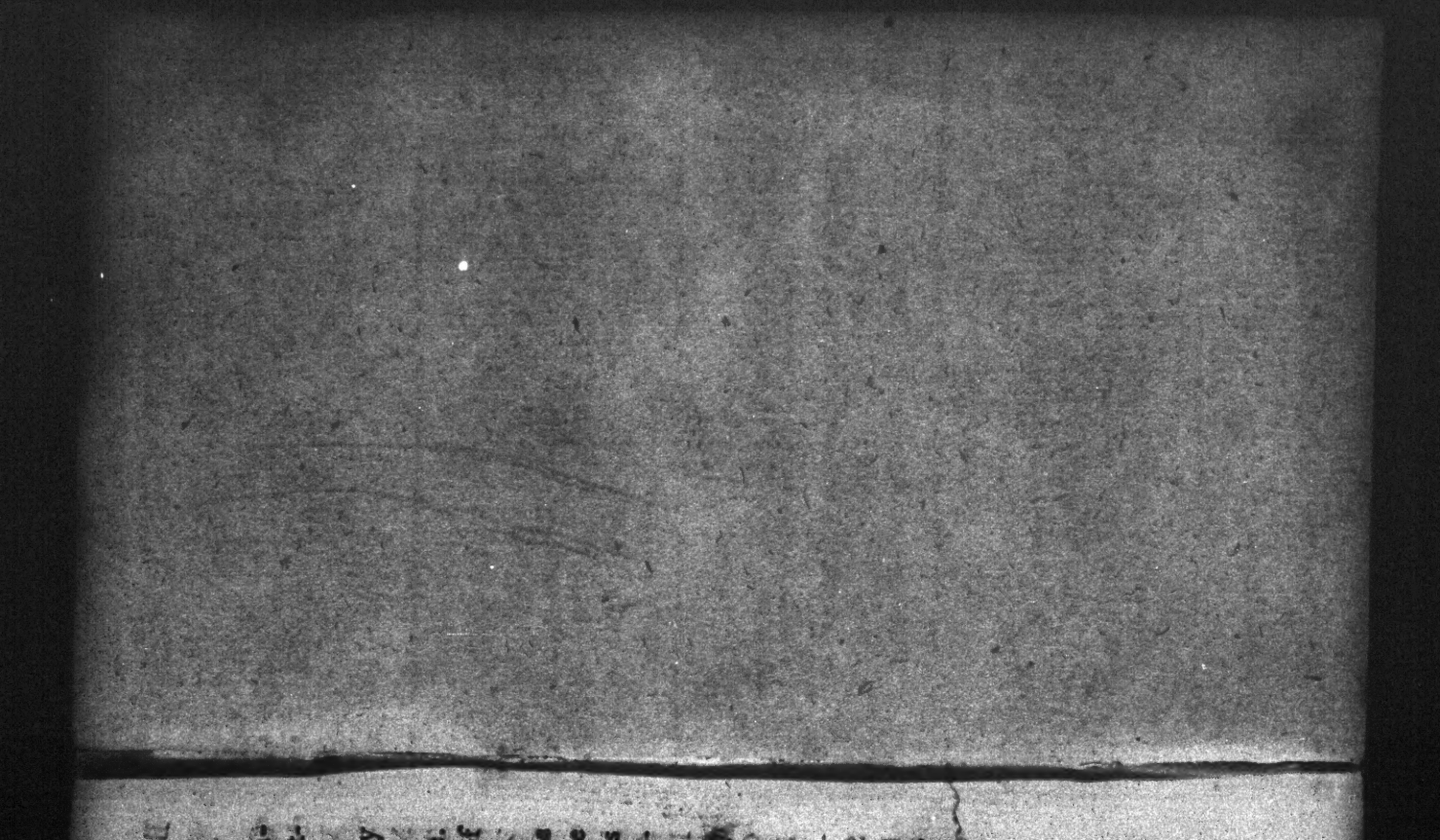
The following by M. de Fenelon, tranſlated from the French.

Dialogues of the Dead and Fables 2 vol:

Dialogues concerning Eloquence with a Letter to the French Academy concerning Rhetoric, Poetry, and Hiſtory.

A Treatiſe on the Education of Daughters.

Letters to the Duke of Burgundy.

Advice to Perſons in Dejection of Mind.

A Demonſtration of the Exiſtence and Attributes of God.